

-THREE-PENCE-

The LUDGATE MONTHLY



Contributions
BY
HELEN MATHERS,
J. A. O'SHEA,
COLONEL MITCHELL,
etc., etc.,
and Song by
CLEMENTINE WARD.

70 ILLUSTRATIONS



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March, 1892.



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Removes all Traces of Tobacco Smoke.

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THEY are genuine curative Electric Belts, constructed upon the principle of the dry pile. They require no moisture other than that of the skin to put them in action, the contact with the body being quite sufficient for medical purposes. They comprise the perfection of the methods adopted by the celebrated Professor A. Humboldt and Dr. Burg, &c., and in every case where doctors usually prescribe a course of hydropathy, one of HARNESS' ELECTROPATHIC BELTS may be substituted with advantage. Acting, as they do, upon all the most important organs of the body, they rarely fail to alleviate most of the disorders resulting from local or general debility, impaired digestion, weak circulation, or defective organic action.

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Acting directly on the system, they sustain and assist its various functions, and thus promote the health and vigour of the entire frame.

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have stood the test of nearly twenty-five years, have restored thousands of sufferers to health and vigour, are guaranteed to be perfectly genuine, and are constructed on sound scientific principles. The Medical Battery Company (Limited) are the Sole Proprietors and Manufacturers of these now world-famed Curative Appliances; and, should any of our readers still have the least doubt as to their *bond-fide* character, they are invited to call without delay at the Company's Electropathic and Zander Institute, 52, Oxford Street (at the corner of Rathbone Place), London, W., where they can see the belts scientifically tested, and can personally examine the thousands of unsolicited testimonials and Press reports that have been received from all parts of the world.



BUSINESS INSTINCT.

NEWSBOY: Paper, sir. Penny, sir.

UNCLE OBADIAH (*from the country*): No; I don't want any paper—can't read.

NEWSBOY: Here; I'll let ye have one for a ha'penny, an' ye can amooos yerself countin' de letters.

READ THIS FACT.

94, Commercial Road, Peckham, July 12, 1889.

"Dear Sir,—I am a poor hand at expressing my feelings on paper, but I should like to thank you, for your lozenges have done wonders for me in relieving my terrible cough. Since I had the operation of 'Tracheotomy' (the same as the late Emperor of Germany, and unlike him, thank God, I am still alive and getting on well) performed at St. Bartholomew's Hospital for abduct, or paralysis of the vocal chords, no one could possibly have had a more violent cough; indeed it was so bad at times that it quite exhausted me. The mucus also, which was very copious and hard, has been softened, and I have been able to get rid of it without difficulty."

Mr. T. Keating.

I am, Sir, yours truly,
J. HILL.

MEDICAL NOTE.

The above speaks for itself. From strict inquiry it appears that the benefit from using Keating's Cough Lozenges is understated. The operation was a specially severe one, and was performed by the specialist, Dr. H. T. Butlin, of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Since the operation, the only means of relief is the use of these Lozenges. So successful are they that one affords immediate benefit, although from the nature of the case the throat irritation is intense. Mr. Hill kindly allows any reference to be made to him.

THE UTTERLY UNRIVALLED REMEDY FOR COUGHS, HOARSENESS AND THROAT TROUBLES.

*"Keating's Cough Lozenges" are sold everywhere, in Tins, 1/1½ and 2/9 each.
Free by Post, 15 Stamps.*

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TO GET RID OF WORMS IN CHILDREN, USE KEATING'S WORM TABLETS.

A PURELY VEGETABLE SWEETMEAT, both in appearance and taste, furnishing a most agreeable method of administering the only certain remedy for **INTESTINAL OR THREAD WORMS**. It is a perfectly Safe and Mild Preparation, and is especially adapted for Children.

Sold in Tins, 1/1½ each, by all Chemists. Free by Post, 15 Stamps.

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PATRICK (after long thought): Sure, I'll tek the forty shillings, yer honour.

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SUGAR-COATED

PILLS.

A Reliable Family Medicine. 40 in a box, Price 1s.

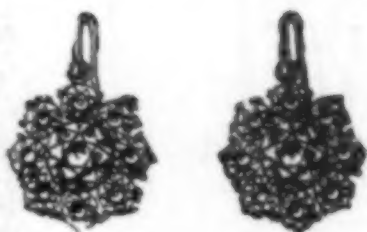
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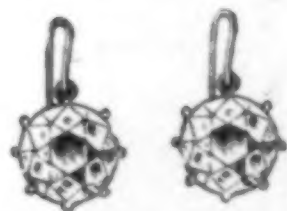
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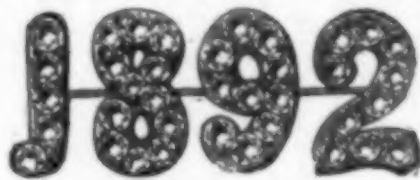
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*USE THEM FOR
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“We have found them a very breast-plate against
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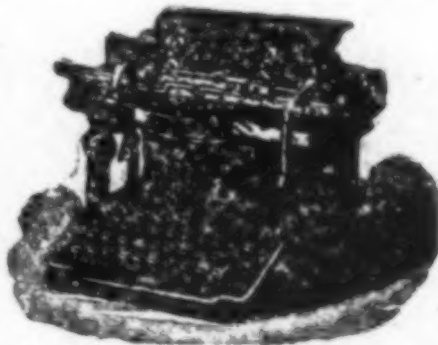


HIS MOTHER: Here, now, sir, what are you doing up there?

TOMMY: Oh, nothin', Ma, nothin'. I'm jist lookin' fer me Sunday school lesson sheet; it's got lost somehow.

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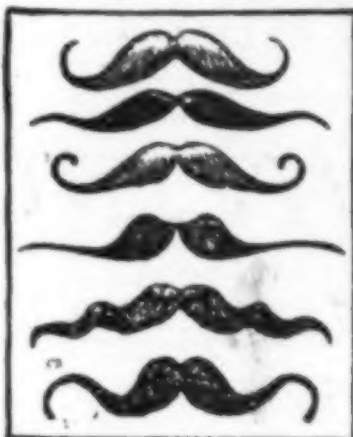
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£104:10:0

IF YOU SOLVE THIS PUZZLE.



THE HOUSEHOLD COMPANION will give, in Cash and Merchandise, £104: 10: 0 to new subscribers sending a correct solution to the above puzzle. To the first new subscriber sending a correct answer, £15 will be given; to the 10th, £10; to the 15th, £5. To the 20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th and 45th, £1 each. To the 50th, 55th, 60th, 65th, 70th and 75th new subscriber sending a correct answer, a Gold Watch will be given. To each of the next 20, a Nickel Watch; and to each of the next 20, a Gold Ring; and to each of the next 5, a beautiful Silk Dress Length; and to the last 4, One Guinea each. The above puzzle is the name of a London Publishing House. Answers must reach us before April 11, 1892.

With your answer send 1s. 3d. Postal Order, crossed & Co., or 18 Penny Stamps, for one quarter's subscription to our 16-Page Monthly Paper. Our May issue will announce the result of this offering, with names and addresses of the successful subscribers. This offer is made solely to advertise our publication and introduce it into new homes. Present subscribers can participate in this offer by extending their subscription another quarter.

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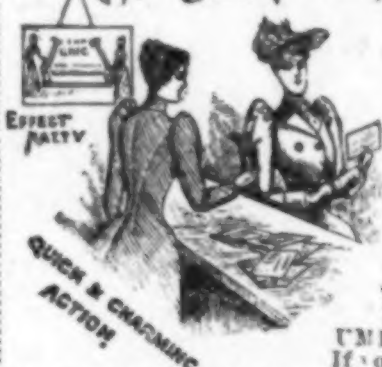
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Why Remain DEAF

Deafness, Head Noises,
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No matter of how long standing—permanently cured by Professor Keith-Harvey's Electric Aural Battery, which is the only one patented throughout the world. Artificial Ear Drums, Rubber Discs, &c., entirely superseded. Self-applied, painless, and absolutely successful. Advice and pamphlet free from PROFESSOR KEITH-HARVEY, 8, Pall Mall, London, S.W. Magnificent Testimonials.

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Our **GRANVILLE CYCLES** are unequalled for design and finish, combined with strength, lightness, and built on graceful lines at the lowest possible prices. All persons interested in Cycles should call and inspect our immense stock of all our latest patterns, comprising nearly 1,000 machines of every known make, new and second-hand, or write for our Illustrated Catalogue, post free. Our **GRANVILLE SAFETIES**, new patterns, solid, cushion, or pneumatic-tyred machines, at prices ranging from £5 to £20, to suit all classes. Every machine fully guaranteed; 12 months warranty given. Any machine sent on approval if desired. Tuition in riding free. Exchanges made. Cycles bought for prompt cash, or sold on reasonable commission. Largest and best selection of second-hand machines of all grades, from £4. Big discounts for prompt cash. Any machine supplied on specially advantageous terms of Easy Payments, from 10s. per month. Write for Illustrated Catalogue and full particulars, post free.

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FREE OF CHARGE.

Write for samples of Frazer's Sulphur Tablets, naming the "Ludgate Monthly," and they will be sent you gratis and post free. Frazer's Sulphur Tablets are the pleasantest and most efficacious of all spring medicines. They are invaluable in the treatment of all Blood and Skin Diseases, Eruptions, Eczema, etc. They are specially indicated for children, being alike safe, pleasant, and efficacious. As a remedy for women's complaints, they are unequalled. They are preventive of Chills, Colds, Rheumatism, and Constipation, and are of great service in the treatment of these complaints. They are the best of all blood purifiers and ward off Influenza and Infectious Complaints. About 600,000 packets were sold in 1891, as Frazer's Sulphur Tablets are one of the greatest successes on record.

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*Positively forces Luxuriant
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Moustachios to grow heavily
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We find ourselves to send to any reader of THE LUDGATE MONTHLY who sends us this Coupon with a Postal Order for 3s., and 6d. to cover postage, one regular 5s. 6d. bottle of Edwards' Instantaneous HARLENE, provided it is ordered within one month from date of Coupon. We make this offer solely for the purpose of making our speciality more widely known, without expending enormous sums in advertising, feeling sure that once having tried HARLENE you will never give up its use for any other preparation (by this offer the public reap the benefit. Address all orders with Coupons. Dated January 1st, 1902.

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"GENUINE" EMERY-EMERY AND GLASS CLOTHS.

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BLOCK BLACK LEADS, KNIFE BOARDS, &c.

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Riding Habits, for Park or Country, with Patent Safety Skirt, from 4½ to 10 guineas.

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Travelling and Useful Cloth Gowns, from the New Irish and Scotch Homespuns, Tweeds and Vicunas, from 4 guineas.

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COUNTRY ORDERS.—Ladies can now be fitted as perfectly as if in town, by the assistance of a Pattern Bodice (which can be sent by post), and a few measures taken by our Registered System. All orders being executed in a few days (Mourning, if necessary, 48 hours), the delay and trouble experienced in many parts of the country is thereby avoided.



New Seal Plush Princess Coat (a capital presentment of real Seal skin), lined Fancy Silk or Seal Satin, made to order, from 5 guineas; or, in Best Alaska Seal skin, made to order, from 25 to 35 guineas.

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ESTABLISHED 1847.

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There is ease for those far gone in consumption—not recovery—ease.

“When past cure, there is strength and comfort, ease and prolonging of life,

in Scott's Emulsion.” — *From CAREFUL LIVING.**

There is cure for those not far gone.

“Consider again what consumption is. It is the growth and reproduction of this germ in the lung, when the lung is too weak to conquer it. The remedy is strength.

The adjustment of lung-strength to overcome germ strength is going on all the time in us. Health for the lungs is fighting this germ with the odds in our favour. Consumption is fighting this germ with the odds against us.

What will cure consumption after you know you have got it?

You do not know you have got it until the fight has been going on against you for some time. It is serious now.

Before it began you were in poor health, and your health has been getting poorer all the time ever since. The germs have got a

good start, and your germ-fighting strength is a good way behind. The question is: Can you now, with the added burden of this disease, recover strength enough to conquer it?

You may or may not. The only way to find out is by trying. Whether you will succeed or not depends on how far along you are in consumption, and how carefully you can live.

Careful living has different meanings for different persons. Your doctor is the one to find out its meaning for you, and to point out the way to health for you. He will tell you that the food to fight consumption with is fat; and that the easiest food-fat is cod-liver oil when partly digested, broken up into tiny drops, as in Scott's Emulsion.” — *From CAREFUL LIVING.*

There is prevention — better than cure—for those who are threatened. Who are threatened?

Every one recognizes the change from being plump to being less plump as a sign of a letting down of health.

Whoever is in a low state of health, inherited or acquired, whether he has ever

suspected a tendency toward consumption or not, inherited or acquired, may well take thought to fortify himself against it.—*From CAREFUL LIVING.*

The remedy—careful living.

This careful living is nothing more than the practice of being comfortable. It belongs

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* CAREFUL LIVING, a small book on the relation of fat to health in the light of medical science of to-day, will be sent free to those who write for it to SCOTT & BOWNE, Limited, Chemists, 47, Farringdon Street, E.C., London.



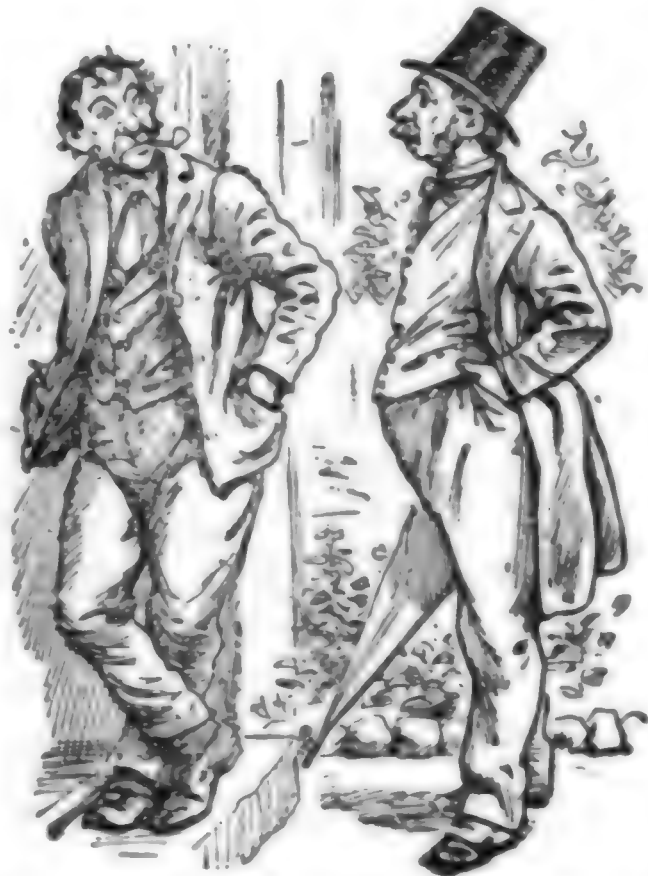
TOMMY: Say, Billy, d'ye see Johnny Jorkins 'es gotten a medal from de Humane Sersiety for fishin' outen de river little Jimmy Johnsein?

BILLY: Yis; wish I could sport a medal like that.

TOMMY (in a hoarse whisper): Wott'll ye gi' me if I fall inter de river axerdentally so's you kin fish me out?

BILLY: But I can't swim.

TOMMY: That ain't nuthin'. I'll 'old yer up till der boat comes!



SCROGGINS (to School Board Attendance Officer): Look'ee 'ere; I ain't going to send my kids to school any more nor I like. I never had any free eddication, or sich like; I'm proud o' my ignorance.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OFFICER (sarcastically): Well, my good man, you've a good deal to be proud of.

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Highest Award Wherever Exhibited.
Latest, Paris Exhibition, 1889.

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For Gentlemen's Boots use ARMY & NAVY LIQUID BLACKING.

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"A priceless boon, a treasure more than wealth;
The banisher of pain, the key to health."

BEECHAM'S PILLS,
ST. HELENS.

WORTH A GUINEA A BOX.

"To breathe 'Sanitas' is to breathe Health."

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"SANITAS OIL"

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DIRECTION: INHALE and FUMIGATE with "SANITAS OIL."

"Sanitas Oil," 1s. Bottles; Inhalers, 2s. 6d.;
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LEADING POINTS.

SPEED.—Highest Record, 181 words in one minute, equal to 758 finger movements, or an average of 12½ per second.

ALIGNMENT.—Perfect and Permanent.

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One machine writes Postcards or Briefs, English and any foreign language.

These are advantages possessed by no other machine. **ARE THEY ADVANTAGES YOU WANT?**

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THE LUDGATE MONTHLY.

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This Weekly Magazine will be published every Wednesday, price One Penny. It will contain 32 pages of stories, articles, and contributions by some of the best authors of the day. Arrangements have already been made for tales and articles by

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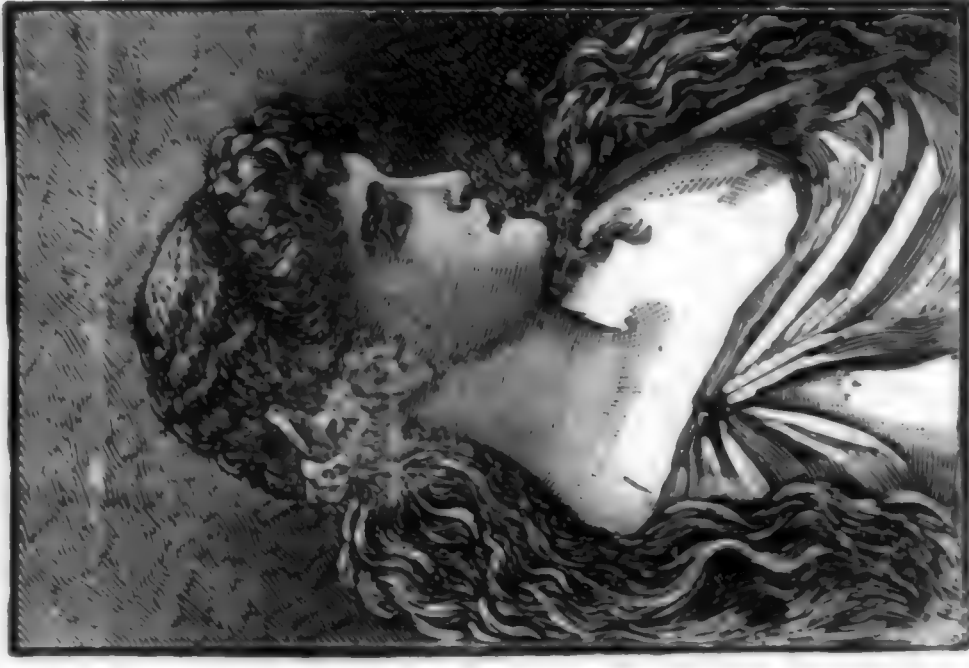
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NOÉMIE.



WROSTELLA'S WEIRD

by Helen Mathers.

INTRODUCTION.



THE many wax-lights on the broad toilette-table shed their soft brightness upon the silver-framed mirror and the shining racks of brushes, pin-holders, and jewel cases, on the unguents, essences, powders and pomades, in gold and silver boxes, and the whole paraphernalia, in short, of an old beauty, instead of the young fresh one, who sat in a big elbow-chair and talked to her own

reflection in the glass for company. Behind her stretched a vast, gloomy room with catafalque-like bedstead, heavy furniture, and walls so darkly panelled that they appeared almost black when the fitful gleam of the fire (sunk deep in the wall) touched them; while, in strictest harmony with their melancholy, sounded, afar off, the sullen dirge of the surf as it washed unendingly on the sea shore. Surely the tripping measure of dance music, the triumphant gladness of song, would have been more suitable to the girl than this sorrowful beat of the heart of the Atlantic Ocean, but she did not seem to heed it, and when presently she sighed, it was more with the impatience of youth, and life, and hope, than for sadness' sake, or because she had anything real to trouble her.

"He will be home soon," she said, nodding at her reflection, "and I will tell him I am sorry—sorry I told him 'I wished him and his Wrostella at the bottom of the sea.' How it howls! It is like the ghosts of the dead, who cry and cry, and no one will let them in. And we were both angry—that is the way with people who love—one is kindest always to the persons to whom one is indifferent. And I have found out something. It is not wickedness, it is not absence, it is not temper, nor ugliness that kills love



"ONLY ONE MONTH MORE, AND THEN FAREWELL," SAID NORMAN.

—it is *ennui*. He was jealous, and I provoking. We are both hot tempered and said lots of things we did not mean. And that is what that wicked old man intended when he condemned his heir to live here for three whole months in the year; but we will be happy yet, Terry and I, in spite of him!"

She dug her dimpled elbows into the toilette-table, then, resting her little face in both palms, laughed mischievously.

"Ah-ha! Monsieur Terry," she said, "what will you say to finding M. Laurent here? And is it my fault that the bleak place chilled him, and he fell ill, and so, while he came but for a day, he has remained a week? And I am not sorry. I am afraid of these people; they would do me a mischief if they could—and if I had not learned to shoot, yes, just like a man, I should not dare to lie down in my bed."

She shifted her face a little to glance down at something lying among the litter of gold and silver toys, something plain and workmanlike, with steel barrels that shone brightly.

"Suzette will have it that we shall be robbed and murdered one night," she went on musingly; "she says 'there are secret passages in the house, known to the peasants, and any one can get in who likes.'"

"Alphonso locks his door—the poor fat fellow is a coward; and, per-



SHE POINTED THE MUZZLE OVER HER SHOULDER, AND FIRED.



HER PALM WAS RED WITH BLOOD.

haps M. Laurent does the same. Heigho! I shall be glad when Terry comes back. There will be only one month more and then Paris—and love—not the *ennui* of pretending to love when one is tired."

She laughed, the rings of silky black hair on her forehead shading her dark eyes as she leaned forward; and, in the same moment, she saw something move in the darkness and shadow of the great room, and straining her sight as into a well of darkness, made out the figure of a man, and knew that it was moving slowly towards her.

Terror seized her—a mad, unreasoning panic dizzied her brain. Here was a murderer, one of those brutish creatures who hated her, and against whom she had been warned even while she mocked them, and it must be his life or hers. In a breath she snatched the pistol from the table, pointed the muzzle over her shoulder, and with wild eyes fixed upon the glass—fired.

A strangled cry, a groan, and all was still. She could not see at first for the mist as of blood before her eyes. When it cleared, the vision had faded like a breath that, but for the moment, had

dimmed the mirror, which now gave back the semi-darkness of the vast and dreary room.

She wanted to turn, to look, to see the fruits of her handiwork, but she had no power to do anything but sit stupidly staring into the mirror, first at nothing, then at herself, who, in one moment of time, had become a criminal, perhaps a murderess.

The pistol had fallen from her hand. Mechanically she began presently to rub her little hands one against the other, looking at them furtively, as if expecting to see blood-stains upon them. What was going on in the darkness behind her? Had the wounded man dragged himself away by the secret way that he had come, or was he bleeding silently to death, or already dead?

The stupor of horror had slowly passed, and presently she got up, and groped her way backwards, a young slight shape, nearly lost in its white draperies, back and back till she came at last to the wall, against which she leaned with outstretched arms, and all the soft skin of her face dulled to a sick pallor, out of which her eyes looked blank and expressionless as a week-old babe's. The sad-coloured carpet stretched unbroken by any strange object before her.

The door was shut, the room empty of any save herself, and silent as the grave.

Her glance travelled vacantly over the panelled walls, then downwards again in search to the floor. Presently, moving like a wavering, unsteady light that is blown hither and thither by the wind, she traversed the room, and, taking a candle from the table, knelt down with it, and pressed her hand to and fro restlessly, seeking for that which she feared to find.

From knee to knee she groped, sweeping

each inch of carpet with her palm, until she had advanced to almost the centre of the apartment, and still there was nothing—nothing—and the trembling hope was beginning to stir in her that perchance a too lively imagination had conjured up the eyes in the glass, when suddenly she felt her palm wet and sticky, and, holding it up, saw that it was red with blood.

A groan broke from her lips. It was true then—and she had slain a man; but who, who? If he could come and go unseen,

might he not be somewhere near her now?

"Terry," she said in a whisper, "why did you go away from me? Why did you bring me here? But learning to shoot was my fault, and if I had not learned, I should not—have—done—this. Perhaps they will hang me, and then you will be sorry that you got tired of me, and went away angry—and stayed away so long. And I will confess to no one but you what I have done—not to Suzette, who would scream and faint; not to M. de Laurent, who thinks a woman's hand should bear nothing but a rose; nor to my father, who hated my marriage, and Wrostella . . . and so if no one comes to take me away, Terry, I will

bear it alone until you come."

She looked no more than a child as she knelt there, gazing at the stain on her hand; but she had a woman's courage, too, for presently she rose, fetched cloths from a press, and set to work on the tiny pool of blood until all traces were removed and the dark, heavy pile looked as before.

Daylight found her kneeling still, but asleep, with arms outstretched as if to clasp the feet of the ivory Christ that hung on the wall by her bed.



"THE POOR FAT FELLOW IS A COWARD."

CHAPTER I.

"O! better ye'd stay at hame, Helen,
And sew your silken seam;
For my house is in the far Hielands,
And ye'll hae puir welcome hame."



WROSTELLA Castle, turning its sullen shoulders on the black bog-land that stretches in a broad slope from the sea shore to the range of mountains that go by the name of the Irish highlands, had been built, apparently, by some madman or misanthrope who intended to be well housed when he selected this dreariest, most God-forsaken spot in the whole island upon which to dwell.

Looking out from its windows, heavily and strongly built, as if to defy time, you could see nothing but the broad Atlantic, and the so-called settlements, many of them not more than eight to ten feet wide, that lie thickly scattered by the shore and on the promontories that jut out into the sea. All have been reclaimed from the wild bog-land by generations of toilers, but toil as they may, the peasants are always poor, nearly always hungry, and life to them means but one long tenacious struggle with death. So hopelessly barren is the ground, so few are the resources that, in this instance, nature in stepmotherly mood has provided them with.

They do not complain, theirs is the apathy of despair, that expects and hopes nothing; you cannot withdraw light from the lens in which no light has come, and not being used to help of any kind, or to do other than starve when their miserable crops of potatoes and oats failed, they did not murmur when from the fortress-like dwelling erected in their midst came neither money, nor food, nor kindness, nor any one of those little favours that it is surely the rich man's highest luxury to afford to the poor man at his gates.

One wild winter's day, Stephen Fitzgerald, travelling over a hundred miles from the nearest railway station in a jolting

open car, had alighted, and standing in the midst of the desolate waste, decided that here, indeed, was a place where neither friend nor enemy would care to follow him, and partly out of the bogwood, partly with materials brought from a great distance, Wrostella was reared and furnished, and with some old servants, as sour of visage as himself, its master entered in, and dwelled there until he died.

Even if the castle had wished to buy, the starving peasants had nothing to sell, and for such things as might not be stored the bog-land was traversed once or twice a week by the cross old man who ruled the kitchen, and was in turn ruled by Mr. Fitzgerald, who lived entirely among his books, save when he took long walks by the sea shore, or for distraction visited the shooting gallery, which was the only unusual feature in the otherwise commonplace house. Here, with every modern appliance around him to test his skill, he would practice for hours, but what pleasure he found in his great proficiency it would be hard to say, unless, indeed, he expected an opportunity for testing it that never came.

What was the secret of his life? What had soured and driven him out from his kind to a solitary existence from which all the sweet uses of life had been extracted?

Even his own family did not know; but one of them, having successfully tracked him to the desert, retired shuddering, and Stephen Fitzgerald was troubled by visitors no more.

With all his callousness to his fellow creatures, he was a just man, and his relations believed themselves secure of the very considerable fortune he had it in his power to leave; but when he died—of an accident in his shooting-gallery—it was charitably said, though others gave it a harsher name—it was found that he had affixed a curious condition to the inheritance of the property, viz.: that his heir should live for four consecutive months out of each year at Wrostella. If he refused to do this (or his frivolous wife for him, which was highly probable) the next heir should inherit, and if he, too, refused the condition attached, then the next, until all Stephen's desirable kin had been gone through till only the very poorest remained.

His heir *did* refuse. He was a rich man and able to throw up two thousand a year rather than cross his wife.

The next in succession being extravagant,

and therefore needy, came over to Wrostell, shuddered, groaned, but decided that with the aid of a few choice spirits, French novels, French brandy, and a good cook, he might survive the ordeal, and accepted the heirship; but, before entering upon it, he went to Paris. Here, in his anxiety to take a good fill of pleasure before his enforced fast, he overdid the pleasure—and died.

Terence came next on the list—Terry, who had only a capful of sunny curls, a pair of Irish blue eyes, and Irish wit, an Irishman's warm heart, and a voice and way that made all the women love him almost before they had looked at him! Money he had none, or, perhaps, five and twenty would not have found him unmarried still; but he did not happen to be wanting to marry anyone very particularly when, after attending his cousin's funeral at Paris, he found himself the next heir, and immediately after—met Noémie.

A creole, born in the South and reared in the lap of Paris, with a father rich beyond the dreams of avarice. Noémie was lovely, spoiled, petulant, and the most charming little person possible, and far too dangerous to the peace of any man who saw her to be the very least in danger herself.

The father found her lovers a constant embarrassment, and at last, following the French fashion, selected a husband, whom he in every way considered suitable to her, and duly presented him to the young lady's inspection.

He was a Frenchman, young, rich, handsome and romantic; moreover, he had the reputation of being extremely successful with the fair sex, and Noémie's heart throbbed a little—not much—at

his impassioned and practised love-making, and was indeed weighing him in the balance, when her father brought young Terence Fitzgerald home to dinner, and M. Laurent's chance was lost.

Noémie's father cursed himself for a fool, when into the girl's

“dark eyes splendour,
Where the warm light loves to dwell,”

came a light that only the young Irishman had known how to bring there—an Irishman with nothing to offer, but a miserable castle in the middle of a bog, and a paltry two thousand a year, on which to keep a young woman steeped to the very lips in the luxuries and refinements of Paris!

It was not Terry who ventured to make any such outrageous proposal to her father, but Noémie herself who calmly informed M. Richepin that she loved Terry, that Terry loved her, and that if she were not allowed to marry him she would die.

Noémie's father laughed, and told her to begin at once, which she promptly did by refusing to eat; and meanwhile, Terry was forbidden the house, and M. Laurent was invited every day in his stead.

M. Laurent came with alacrity, for he passionately loved the girl, quite apart from her money, and did not believe in her having more than an ephemeral fancy for Terry.

When he kissed her hand, she promptly boxed his ears; when he tried his well-known, and usually effective style of love-making she laughed in his face, and, indeed, bid fair to extinguish any very real passion by making him look ridiculous.

A Frenchman's vanity is even a



MR. FITZGERALD LIVED ENTIRELY AMONG HIS BOOKS.

more delicate plant than an Englishman's, and when wounded, bleeds much longer than his heart ; and M. Laurent, for all his love, never forgave Noémie, and might even pay her out some day if he ever got the chance. And meanwhile, she dwindled, faded, stifling the pangs of hunger with strenuous determination, and defying her father's mingled comments and entreaties, until, when from pure exhaustion, she could no longer leave her bed, M. Richepin gave up the unequal contest, and furiously told her to send for her Terry to take her away to his Irish bog, when she would die in real earnest of *ennui* in a week.

She did send for him. He, too, had suffered considerably, seeing no prospect of overcoming her father's opposition ; but love lit such warm fires in their eyes, and the shelter of each other's arms was so sweet, that the prospect of four months alone together in the wilderness sent Noémie into ecstasies ; and if he shook his head, and said she would find him but a dull fellow for sole company, she did not believe him, and so the formal betrothal took place. Four months' exile out of each year in the wilderness, and an extremely limited income all the year round, did not, in the least, cool their transports, and in due course the formal betrothal took place.

M. Laurent swallowed his disappointment and attended it, looking indeed so handsome and manly, that had Noémie not been blinded by love, she must have seen that he made even Terry compare unfavourably with him, while M. Richepin

angrily shrugged his shoulders, feeling quite convinced that before three months were over she would be bitterly repenting her bargain. He knew his daughter's tastes better than she knew them herself, as fathers indeed often do know the characters of the children whom they have reared with the utmost devotion, only to be forsaken for the first wandering fancy that crosses their paths.

And his heart was full of bitterness when a month later he saw the untried girl set out with such blithe gladness for the distant town that he had never seen, with a man of whom he knew nothing save that he bore an honourable name, and had a charming appearance and manner—and very little else besides—or so thought M. Richepin.

Perhaps Noémie realized then what all his years of care and devotion had done for her, and all as it were for the reaping of a stranger, for she clung round his neck long and closely, and promised to come back soon, "for," said she, "these four

months will pass like a day, father, both to you and to me!"

He sighed as he gave her back to her husband, pitying her for her youthful haste and ignorance, but it was something more than a fancy that she took with her to Wrostell, packed in among her *bibelots* and laces, her jewels, and girlish vanities ; it was a very true and tender heart that did not change easily, and that was, moreover, good to the very core.

Even the hundred and thirty miles jolt across country, all traces of civilization



TERRY CONQUERED, AND M. LAURENT'S CHANCE WAS LOST.

rapidly disappearing, and pleasant green fields but a memory, save for an occasional patch by some lonely lake, could not daunt their happiness, nor when they descended from the lofty mountains to ugly, squat, Wrostella, did their spirits sink, though the gloomy darkness of the house, and the forbidding looks of the old servants might have chilled less love-warm hearts than theirs.

They brought into the place a burst of life and sunshine, and the French cook and maid who followed them, being in the initial stages of courtship, also contributed their own gaiety with them, refusing to be influenced by the funereal surroundings, or the scowls of the "images," as they irreverently termed the custodians of the castle. They even approved of the wild Atlantic, and went to walk on its shores, picking their steps delicately over the miserable cabins, that could scarcely be distinguished from the huge boulders that cumbered the ground, and, in French fashion, shrugging their shoulders at the squalor, which seemed as natural to these poor people as did all the comforts of life to them.

But Alphonse, though in love, had no idea of supporting the tender passion without sublime cooking of every description, and one of the most intelligent of the peasants spent the major part of his existence in fetching from Londonderry the necessary ingredients for those dinners which were served up as faultlessly as if for a dinner party in the Champs Elysées.

M. Richepin had lent the man, with a year's princely wages, to the young people for the time they would be at Wrostella, "because," said he, "only the most excellent cooking will enable you two young folks to support existence entirely alone for four whole months, and when the usual monotony of love sets in, you will always be able to find distraction in Alphonse's inspirations, for lovers always say the same thing, but cooks are sometimes different."

He had also asked leave to provide the young people's establishment with all they required during the period they resided at Wrostella, and he had given Alphonse *carte blanche* for all expenses.

"It was all that he could do for his daughter's happiness," he said to himself cynically, and he had done it. If anything on earth could prolong the season of love for two young people, shut up for a month in a desert, it would be the genius of an inspired cook, and they had got him.

He would not have gone, this chevalier of the stew-pans, had not beauty drawn him "with a single hair," and that hair growing on the dark head of Noémie's delightfully pretty maid, Suzette.

He had fallen in love with her at first sight, but his opportunities of seeing her in the Champs Elysées mansion were few, so that when M. Richepin, fully expecting a refusal, laid his commands on the *chef* to accompany the young pair, he was amazed at the celerity of the man's consent.

M. Alphonse, having a very good idea of what Wrostella would be, felt that, out of sheer *ennui*, Suzette would be obliged to smile upon him; and Suzette did.

The grim old servants, scandalized at the French sprightliness, airs, and ways of the smart pair below stairs, glowered, hovered awhile in the darkness, and fled.

They were replaced by cheerful, buxom young maids and stalwart serving-men from Londonderry, who bore the appalling dullness for a longer or shorter period that varied with the charms of the women-folk; still, in one way or the other, the service of the house was suitably conducted, and, in addition to the French servants, Tim, an old adherent of Terry, remained from first to last through the many changes in the servants' hall. And outside, the peasants, who had received and expected nothing from



THE CHEF AND THE MAID APPROVED OF THE ATLANTIC.

the former Fitzgerald, looked for as little from the new comers, of whose doings, indeed, they knew nothing, and cared less, being ignorant, even beyond the comprehension of what luxury meant, for to rightly appreciate anything, one must be cognizant of its true value, and these people had never learned the value of anything, not even money, which they never touch, save when, by the sale of stock, fed on the rough mountain pastures, they scrape together sufficient for the rent of their lands and pay it over to their landlord.

The sea was alive with fish and they had but one boat between them. If their scanty crops of potatoes and oats failed, then so much the worse for them. The Atlantic was before, the bog behind, and the pitiless sky above them. Help from man! there was none. They were not to know that in the future a noble-hearted English-woman was to come to their assistance, giving her time, brains, and money, to help them to bring light into their heathenish ignorance of all domestic arts and slowly and painfully teach them such industries as enabled them to earn money enough to live in comfort and self-respect, and, in a word, to raise them from all-fours to upstanding, intelligent men and women who, happy in their honourable toil, this day verily rise up and call her blessed.

But, as yet, no such gracious figure had loomed on the horizon of these poor people from whom Terry rigorously kept his wife apart, having no wish to see her young brightness dimmed and her spirit saddened by their hopeless poverty—so hopeless, indeed, that only a rich man might successfully cope with it, and only then by devoting his whole time, as well as a fortune, to the task. And Terry had but one life

to live, and in those days he was selfish in his new found happiness, and so long as he kept her happy, considered the first duty of his life performed.

And Noémie was ignorant, too—ignorant of the harsher side of life, as but few French, and no English women are; and these strange people who never begged, never by word or sign acknowledged her presence when she passed them, appealed to her sympathy no more than if they had been cabbages, and it is almost a rule with selfish youth never to offer what is neither directly or indirectly asked for.



IN THE SHOOTING GALLERY.

So Noémie never saw the inside of those miserable hovels, and indeed, would have been afraid to venture into one of them alone, for Terry (and this was wrong of him) encouraged her to think that every peasant was a Fenian in disguise, and their apathy seemed to her sullenness, and the fact that they possessed no fire-arms, did not deter her from drawing living mental pictures of them as masked assassins appearing at her bedside, in the dead of night, intent either upon her life or the jewels, that would enable them to launch a whole fleet of fishing boats upon the unfished sea.

Suzette shared in her mistress's feeling, so lowering were the glances cast upon her frivolous self and Alphonse in their walks abroad, glances that were not even appeased by the gracious permission he afforded the peasants to come up to the castle for such food as over-flowed its inmates' needs. Alas! their wants were too colossal to be satisfied by broken bread, and all along the sea-board, covering an area of nearly one thousand square miles, the same utter destitution prevailed. Indeed, it was just as well that Noémie did not know, and that

they made her afraid instead of miserable, so afraid, indeed, that she took to studying ardently the art of self-defence, and passed long days in the shooting gallery, with Terry, and the story of which she also did not know, or probably nothing would have induced her to set foot inside it.

Every modern device that could encourage skill in a marksman was there, as well as every arm or instrument of warfare now used in any part of the globe. But it was in pistol-shot practice that Noémie delighted, and in which she at last became even more proficient than her husband. And he, only too eager to invent or discover new methods of passing time, was perfectly happy to attend and applaud her, so that soon the one quaintly rich apartment in the hideous house became the one they habitually occupied. And Suzette rubbed her little plump hands, and told Alphonse that *now* Madam's jewels would be safe, if by chance Mr. Fitzgerald should be called away—as husbands occasionally are—from their wives, especially when, *mon Dieu!* they were buried alive in such a place as Wrostella. She was well able to defend herself, and Terry, watching his wife as she shattered to atoms a swaying glass ball, at which, with the aid of a mirror, she aimed over her shoulder, thought so, too, and confessed himself fairly beaten out of the field.

CHAPTER II.

"O denia see yon castle, Helen,
That shines sae fair to see?
There is a lady in it, Helen,
Will sinder you and me."



LOVE and kisses (apt to become monotonous if extended over too long a period and always with the same person) carried the young people over the first month's enforced sojourn in the wilderness; shooting, and M. Alphonse

over the next; but with the third came, to three of the party, that intense *nostalgia* known only to true Parisians who have been born, as it were, on the Boulevards, have lived on them, and, as nearly as pos-

sible, die on them, for no other place seems so good to them under Heaven.

And Noémie, looking out at the wild wintry weather and the storm-lashed sea, longed for the life, the beauty, the movement of the great city, for the flowers, the cheerful voices, the *gaieté de cœur* with which Paris infects all its inhabitants; for the drives in the Bois that she had once valued so highly; for the new fashions that would make her present attire positively *démodé*; for the evening papers that she had taken as a matter of course, but now so sorely missed; for all the shifting, brilliant panorama, in short, of the life to which she had been accustomed. And, last, but by no means least, she missed very greatly the father whom she had loved better than anything in the world before Terry came—Terry who had possessed all the charms of the unknown, and who now stood confessed in all the faults of an intimate friend. For if Stephen Fitzgerald's hatred of his kind could have suggested one method of vengeance upon it more fiendish than another, it would have been the throwing of a young man and woman, almost entire strangers to each other, absolutely on one another's society, without a single extraneous source of enjoyment for months, and if his spirit walked, as it was popularly supposed to do, it must have been thoroughly happy in observing the signs of *ennui* that gradually crept over the pair.

A man can't change his nature because he has accidentally got married, and Terry loved an outdoor life, and excelled in hunting, shooting, fishing, and other manly exercises usually affected by persons whose muscles are in an inverse ratio to the quantity and quality of their brains.

He adored Noémie, but it is one thing to want a morsel of bread, and another to see loaves ranged in endless perspective on shelves, all waiting to be eaten; and the very kindest thing a friend could have done would be to separate this young pair for a considerable time, until a real hunger for the sight of each other's faces should overtake them.

They had plenty of books, papers, and music, and the immortal Alphonse took good care that a considerable part of their time should be devoted to the consideration of those masterpieces into which he threw his whole soul.

For he and Suzette, too, though having the immense advantage over their master

and mistress that they were not married, had reached the point of almost yawning in each other's faces; and the *soubrette*, after the fashion of maids of all nationalities, contrived in various ways to make Noémie uncomfortable, and more and more dissatisfied with her dismal surroundings.

It would have been the height of folly to transport French furniture and French surroundings across a hundred or more miles of bog, but Suzette groaned over their absence all the same, and looked and felt as thoroughly out of her element as a dainty drawing room cat, who is suddenly lodged in an empty barn.

She found time to discover several grey hairs in Alphonse's head, and some serious defects in his temper, and if there had been a man in the place worthy of a glance from her soft, black eyes he would have got it. Her mistress was better off than she, for there was the shooting gallery, but, alas!

Noémie had learned all there was to learn in it, and the two young people sought in vain to hide from each other the weariness that threatened to consume their love, and the restiveness which daily and hourly enforced companionship must inevitably develop in even the most loving souls.

Perhaps the fault lay most with Noémie, for a woman never forgets that marriage is a chain with herself at one end and a man at the other, and when she places the man she loves under a microscope (as a man, indeed, very seldom puts a woman), it is seldom to his advantage, or her own peace of mind that she does so.

And Noémie expected too much, and was disappointed to find that her idol was not made of pure gold at all, but ordinary clay, though, as he had never pretended to be anything else, this was unreasonable on her part—and womanly. Gradually, in her mind, he took colour from her surroundings, which were hard, gray, and full of a great weariness to this true child of the South, who had been steeped to the lips in the luxury of the French capital and whose life had been full of warmth, and colour, and movement until now.

Possibly her father had understood this spoiled product of civilization better than she had understood herself, or rather, he knew very little of the depths of her heart, and a great deal of the power that the mere force of habit had over her, and bleak Wrostellia, with its moaning seaboard, had seemed to him the very last place in which

to face the disillusioning process of the first months of married life.

Gradually it became borne in upon Terry's mind—and, like most men of the better sort, he was naturally unsuspicious—that she was aware of having made a huge mistake, that she regretted it, and that after all M. Laurent would have been a much more suitable husband for her than himself.

And once that idea got firmly lodged in Terry's hot head—and he was not an Irishman for nothing—it was very hard to get out again, and being by no means disillusioned of Noémie, but only a little tired, after the fashion of men, he became passionately jealous, and, in due proportion, disagreeable, so that soon the "ruder words rushed in" compared with which their passing discontent had been as Paradise.

Noémie's bloom had begun to fade, the place was telling on her physically, and her temper—as passionate a one as Terry's own—suffered in consequence, so that both were in the mood when the merest spark would cause an explosion, and that spark came, when one day Terry received at breakfast a letter in the handwriting of a lady that disturbed him mightily, and the contents of which he did not communicate to his wife.

"I must leave you," he said abruptly, as they rose from table, then rang, and gave orders that the car should be prepared at once, and a small portmanteau put ready.

"Where are you going?" said Noémie coldly.

"I am going on business, and may be three days absent—or more. My uncle's will only insists on my making a residence of this place for four months, it does not forbid my leaving it for a short time on an emergency."

"If that is so, why could you not have broken the monotony by taking me away for a few days?" she said wearily.

"Have you found it so terrible?" he said, turning to look at her keenly, and Terry's blue eyes could be very keen sometimes, and even hard.

"I have found it dull," she said, with a glance that cut him to the quick.

"And you would not have been dull with Laurent?" he said calmly.

"No."

"And Wrostellia is not Paris?"

"No, alas!"

"And you wish you had never come?"

"Yes; and I wish—I wish that you and your Wrostellia were at the bottom of the sea before I had ever seen either of you!"

cried Noémie, beside herself at his abrupt departure, his silence as to why he went, and the strangeness of his manner towards her.

"Do you mean that?" he said, turning upon her a face so strangely altered that she scarcely knew it.

Her heart cried out "No! No!" In that moment all her weariness of his company had vanished and she loved him as passionately as ever; but she was spoiled, and proud southern blood burned hot in her, and she said deliberately, "Yes."

He came nearer and looked at her—at the young, alluring beauty that had made him her slave, and said, roughly—

"You wish that you had married M. Laurent?"

"I do," she said, clenching her hands hard that she might not break down and fall upon his neck with tears and kisses.

"You may be able to do so yet," he said, then went swiftly away, and in another minute had left the house.

But it was surely a misfortune that the very next day M. Laurent should come jolting across the bog from Londonderry, laden with gifts and messages from M. Richepin, who had taken advantage of the young Frenchman's visit to

Ireland to obtain some positive news of his young daughter's well-being, of which he had had some serious doubts of late.

Did the experienced man, indeed, think that a little company might be good for these two poor, young people thrown so absolutely on each other, nay, that even a little jealousy might not be amiss in the deadly dulness of the Wrostella *ménage*? Any way, it was M. Richepin who suggested this journey across the bog, and as the Frenchman was still more or less in love, and decidedly curious as to how the marriage

had turned out, he duly undertook the jaunt, repenting himself bitterly of his folly when, after many hours' exposure, in very insufficient clothing, to the most inclement weather, and without having had the chance of breaking his fast on the road, he arrived at Wrostella, only to be caught, instantly, in the grips of pneumonia, and cast helplessly on a sick bed.

Noémie, startled, had welcomed him coldly enough, but his real illness became so quickly apparent, that she had soon no thought but how his life might be saved, and

when by extraordinary efforts a doctor had been obtained, and everything possible done, and when after three days of great danger the young Frenchman had turned the corner, the girl sat down to think of Terry, and Terry's extraordinary conduct. She had received a line from him, and the extent of the hurt inflicted upon him by her passionate words was shown by the resentment he evidently felt towards her.

And what would he say when he returned home, to find M. Laurent installed here? A stranger looking in one evening at the cosy interior made by a bright fire and lights, and flowers,

by the beauty of the two young people, who sat and chatted together, might well have been excused for thinking that these were bride and bridegroom, who had brought their own sunshine into the dismal house of Wrostella.

And it was on that very night, when some of the old brightness had come back to the girl's voice and heart, that the sinister incident occurred of which mention has been made in the introduction to this story.

(To be concluded.)



"I WISH YOU WERE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA."



By

S. J. Adair Fitzgerald.



WAS down by the sounding sea that I first heard about it. The curlews were waddling along the sands in their absurd manner, crying to the sea-mews and the sea-gulls that skimmed over the crested waves, sometimes taking a rest on the backs of the galloping white sea-horses,

when a pretty mermaid came and sat on a laughing wave and commenced combing out her tresses with a cock's-comb. Now I had never been introduced to a mermaid before, and so I felt bashful and scarcely knew what to do. Just as I was on the point of departing she called to me saying "Don't go away! what a funny looking creature you are."

This I thought exceedingly rude, because I am not funny looking; though I thought *she* was the funniest creature alive—quite like a fish half out of water.

"Miss Mermaid," I observed in a stately manner, "we have not been introduced; and I don't think it right of you to sit there combing out your locks before a stranger, and without a looking-glass, too."

"I'm a good *looking-lass* myself, you know," she said and laughed; and, seeing I had my pipe with me, she enquired: "Are

you a poet? Is that the Pipe of Pan?"

What an inquisitive person!

"No," I answered reprovably, quite shocked at her ignorance. "This," I continued, "is the Pipe of Tobacco; but since you have done up your hair, I don't mind telling you, I *am* a Poet, though I cannot help it."

"Is your name Pipplepop?" was her next question.

"Pippleby Pipplepop is my name,
Nodland is my nation;
Dreaming is my daily aim,
A Bard my occupation."

I sang proudly, while the sea-shells pricked up their tiny ears, and the winkles opened their eyes in great surprise.

"Dear me! how tiresome you are! I have been waiting for you all the morning! Don't you know that it is Peachblossom's wedding-day?" she exclaimed.

I had quite forgotten. I had been to see my friends the Nids, most respectable people who keep their own snails, and my invitation to see Peachblossom and Yellow Star married in Fairyland had slipped my memory. That was because I saw a cow-slip, and forgot to turn my head round. So I apologised to the Mermaid, who promptly said:

"Well, make haste—here's an old sea dog coming; you must ride on his back to the Fairy Isles, or we shall be too late."

So I took her fin and got on the bark directly, the dog, quite a new kind, opened his mouth; and soon we were rocking and

sailing on the Cradle of the deep. We quickly reached the Fairy Isles, tied the Cradle to the Sandy Bar, and sought the glade where the Queen of the Fairies was seated surrounded by her court.

"Pippleby Pipplepop sings till he can't stop." It was Puck, I knew his voice at once.

"Silence!" called the Town Crier; "the Queen of Hearts is coming. Poet and Jester be off to Leicester."

The Queen of Hearts came with the King, and it was quite touching to see how loving they were.

"Where's the rest of the Pack?" asked Puck mischievously, at which the King frowned and said severely:

"You know very well when the Fairies marry we never have either the Clubs, the Knaves, or the Diamonds, we only have Hearts in our marriages. The rest of the Pack have been packed off to do a day's washing."

"Now, Pipplepop!" called Her Majesty Queen Titania, it is time the mortals went to bed. Let us have your latest song. What, ho! there, guard; close the curtains of night over the world, that we may hold revel."

Then the Glow-worms, and the Fire-flies, and the Will-o'-the-Wisps, and the Jack-o'-Lanterns lit their lamps, and hung themselves on the ferns and the flowers, and while the attendants were dressing the bride, and the best man was trying to tie the bridegroom's necktie, and pin his collar down, the fairies tripped forth and sang—

When birds sleep in their nest,
And mortals sink to rest,
In moonlight dell by crag and fell,
O'er peaky mountain's crest;
We fairies leave our bow'rs,
The sweet-scented flow'rs,
By brake and brae we take our way,
Like rainbow-dancing show'rs.

So trip, trip, and with lightest trip
O fairies dance with daintiest skip
All in the vale and moonlit dell;
With graceful step we dance so light,
For this is the fairies' wedding night,
And yearly feast as well.

When cloudland vaults are blue,
The sprightly elfin crew,
Meet ev'ry night by bright starlight,
To keep our customs true.
And over mortals' sleep,
Till daylight comes to peep,
With blessings fair and watchful care,
The safest guard we keep.

So trip, trip, and with lightest trip,
O fairies dance with daintiest skip,
All in the vale and moonlit dell,
With graceful tread we keep in time,
And sing a song with a jingling rhyme
Then away and away—but never tell!

"That's rather good, girls," said saucy Puck. "I must ask you to my next tea party. I've got a boys' school coming."

Before the song was finished all the fairies from every where and nowhere came, some bringing butter-cups to drink out of, while others brought toadstools upon which to sit. The Jibbaninies and the Pickaninnies, the Pynts and the Pints, the



SOON WE WERE ROCKING ON THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP.

Nids and the Nods, and the Tins and the Tines—never was seen such a gathering of fairies before. I could not possibly tell you the names of them all, but they were all there, especially those I have not mentioned. Even the *Court News* man did not know every one, but as they had all paid the entrance fee—which was a Compliment—it was all right.

But where were the bride, Peachblossom, and the bridegroom, Yellow Star, all this time? And above all where *was* Cupid? How could the wedding proceed or be happy if Cupid were not present? Somebody whispered that he was present all the while, though he was so busy that nobody saw him. Later on, when I met him, he had

not got an arrow left, so he must have been busy!

Once again the Town Crier called "silence" when one of the shades of night fell down and extinguished him, which was for speaking without being spoken to. Presently the space round the Magic Altar was cleared and the bridegroom hurried in with his best man, Red Ripe Star from the top side of the Moon. Poor Yellow Star looked dreadfully flurried. He had his boots on up-side down, and his coat of fresh paint on with the back part before. His gloves were all thumbs, and his neck-tie was round his waist; but soon everything was put right, and the beautiful bride, Peachblossom, and her bridesmaids looked simply lovely, dressed mostly in kind favours bestowed

Moonflower, while the whole company of faires, sprites, and pigmies sang:

"Fairy, Fairy, light and airy,
Where are you going to live?"

"Down in the dell, where buttercups dwell,
There we are going to live."

"Fairy, Fairy, light and airy,
What shall you have to eat?"

"Kisses and tarts from Cupid's darts,
That's what we'll have to eat."

"Fairy, Fairy, light and airy,
What shall you have to drink?"

"The softest of dew from flowers so true.
That's what we'll have to drink."

"Fairy, Fairy, light and airy,
Do not forget your vow;
Kiss your bride twice and turn her round thrice,
And then to the company bow."



THEN THE GLOW-WORMS LIT THEIR LAMPS, AND THE FAIRIES TRIPPED FORTH AND SANG.

by their friends, the flower of youth, the garb of truth with fairy gauze, and a garland of roses and lilies, while each one had a small bud of affection pinned to her dress as well.

And then the ceremony commenced with much chanting and magic rites and taking of vows, and smiles, and marchings in and out and up and down. Cupid was the high priest, assisted by the King of Hearts, while the King of Fairies gave the bride away. Towards the close, when Yellow Star had placed the magic ring on Peachblossom's finger, Pink, who officiated as clerk, commenced to beat Time, who had called to see what was going on, with the stem of a

This being satisfactorily done, Yellowstar and Peachblossom were married, and went for their honeymoon on a visit to the Busy Bells. Then Music of the Art played merry tunes, while the fairies feasted and sang and danced, and the Nids talked scandal to the Nods, and Puck made fun for them all, and the Fairy Isles shook with laughter.

Then Puck said gaily, "My friend, the Court Poet, Mr. Pippleby Pipplepop, has just handed me a serious ballad to sing before the cock begins to crow, and if you will pay as little attention as you possibly can, I shan't feel the least inoffended."



PEACHEBLOSSOM AND HER BRIDESMAIDS LOOKED SIMPLY LOVELY.

Now once upon a time,
As you have doubtless heard,
There lived a most original King,
Who never kept his word.

He lived among the stars,—
His daughter was the sun,
He argued all day long with Mars,
About a penny bun.

This funny King, a singular thing,
Never did aught but laugh and sing,
The best advice all scorning;
He sold his throne for half-a-crown,
And sang this ballad through the town:
"Hot ices every morning!"

And so it came about,
The Queen went off her head,
And let the Sands of Time run out,
To buy a loaf of bread!

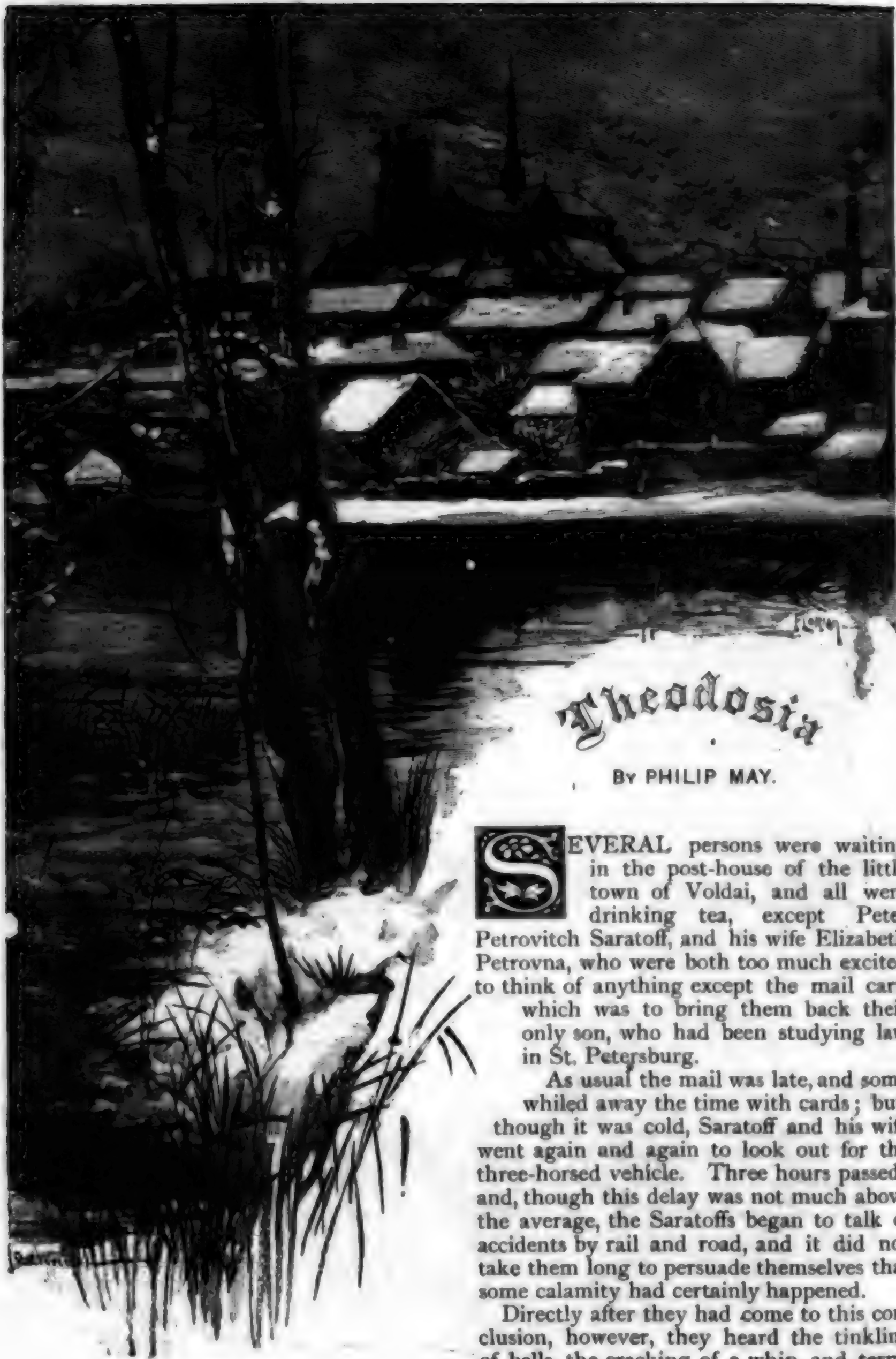
A Comet heard the noise,
And said "Why that is sound!
I'll change the girls and make them boys,
And sell them by the pound."

A passing bird said "That's absurd,
Such nonsense never before I've heard,
That Comet must be scheming."
Then the King awoke in a fearful fright,
And found it was the morning bright,
And that he had been dreaming.

Puck was just beginning another song
when the farmyard fowls across the way set
up such an awful din for their breakfast,
that the fairies all vanished no one knows
where, and the sun rose in a hurry, quite
flushed, and that is all I know about the
Fairy's Wedding.



CUPID WAS THE HIGH PRIEST, AND THE CEREMONY COMMENCED WITH A PROCESSION.



VOLDAL FROM THE RIVER.

Theodosia

By PHILIP MAY.

SEVERAL persons were waiting in the post-house of the little town of Voldai, and all were drinking tea, except Peter Petrovitch Saratoff, and his wife Elizabeth Petrovna, who were both too much excited to think of anything except the mail cart, which was to bring them back their only son, who had been studying law in St. Petersburg.

As usual the mail was late, and some whiled away the time with cards; but, though it was cold, Saratoff and his wife went again and again to look out for the three-horsed vehicle. Three hours passed; and, though this delay was not much above the average, the Saratoffs began to talk of accidents by rail and road, and it did not take them long to persuade themselves that some calamity had certainly happened.

Directly after they had come to this conclusion, however, they heard the tinkling of bells, the cracking of a whip, and terms of endearment addressed to the three horses

driven abreast; and the anxious parents had scarcely time to throw open the door and rush out, before the mail cart drew up in front of the post house.

Everyone was in a state of excitement; but the Saratoffs were wild with delight.

A young man jumped out, and almost immediately his mother's arms were around his neck.

"Hm! Hm! Am I nobody?" Peter Petrovitch asked, becoming tired of waiting for his turn; and then father and son kissed each other on each cheek.

"Why what a prince you are, with your seal skin cap and your seal lined coat! He'll be too grand for us, won't he, Elizabeth?" the old man said, looking at his son with eyes that beamed.

Then the old folks led the young man home in triumph, each taking an arm. They were very proud that day, though until 1863 they had been serfs, who worked for themselves, it is true, but paid *obrok* to their lord for the permission to be absent from his estate. Elizabeth Petrovna had kept the best millinery shop in Voldai, and Peter Petrovitch had been a builder, and dealer in wood, bark, hides, and general merchandise; but though they were fairly well-to-do before the Law of Emancipation was promulgated, still, up to that time, their noble lord might legally have seized their all, and have reduced them to the position of field or house serfs.

Now they had a son who was a member of the new bar; and it was well known that they were the richest couple in Voldai, since the old lord had been ruined by the Emancipation Act. The government took the greater part of the *barrin's* land in order to hand it over to the emancipated "souls;" and they paid him only eighty per cent. of the government valuation, in notes which were at a discount of 20 per cent., so that he really received less than two-thirds of the value. Then his manufactory of wooden articles, which had paid him well in the past, ceased to be remunerative, as the emancipated

carpenters wanted high wages, and did their work badly; and worst of all, the *barrin*, finding himself in possession of an unusual quantity of ready money, went to St. Petersburg, and treated his capital as income. Peter Petrovitch—the surname of Saratoff was assumed at a later date—became the steward of the absent nobleman; and when Peter Petrovitch took his son to the University of St. Petersburg, he had to take not only a note of introduction from his noble master, but also one of greater value, bearing the signature of the governor of the

Petersburg Bank, in order to induce the rector to admit a youth of such low origin.

Now at last, after five years' absence, Ivan had returned; and the old folks were prouder of him than of the rest of their possessions, though they certainly did not think too little of worldly goods.

"You see that butcher's shop, my little Ivan," the father remarked; and when his son had nodded, he continued, "That is mine."

The young barrister looked rather disappointed, and his mother said, "Someone had to make a profit out of feeding the hands, and so your father has the meat store, and that corner bakery we are coming to, is mine."

They had been walking slowly; but now, though some snow still lay on the ground, they stopped.

"The timber yard before us," said Peter Petrovitch proudly, "is where I worked as a serf when I was a boy. It now belongs to us, as well as all the contents. After the emancipation, you know, the men wanted high wages, and would not work well; but just when the *barrin* got tired of losing money, and sold the yard to me at a bargain, they came to their senses. The factory down there by the river is also ours. Your mother and I had to put all our money together to buy out our old master; but now we have no cause to complain."



IVAN FIRST SAW THEODOSIA IN CHURCH.



THE OLD FOLKS SAT DOWN IN THEIR RECEPTION ROOM TO WAIT FOR IVAN'S RETURN.

The old man rubbed his hands together in delight, and then waited a while for the congratulations which did not come; but he halted again on his doorstep, and, instead of knocking, turned round as if to admire the view.

"You can just see the *barrin's* mansion from here," he said. "Well, it does not belong to us yet; but it will be ours when the lord wants another loan, and we hope to give it you as a wedding present, if you will only offer us, in return, a daughter-in-law whom we take to our hearts."

This news really did interest and rejoice Ivan, and he pressed a hand of each of his parents. Then the door of the house was opened, and the servant said that Ivan's baggage had arrived, and he was shown to his room.

The old folks, who had been loth to part with their son even for a few minutes, sat down in their reception room to wait for his return.

Ivan was some time, but they waited patiently, and in silence, sitting just in front of the open piano, upon which no one had ever played in their house, though the last popular military march had been placed ready for a pianist.

Neither the father nor the mother rose when their son returned. They waited for him to notice the musical instruments, but he forgot how plainly the place had been furnished when he went away, and when they drew his attention to the piano and guitar, which had been purchased for his amusement during his stay with them, he was surprised, and said he did not play at all.

"Art! ah, yes, I paint," he said when they produced his letters, all of which had been treasured up.

"What!" exclaimed Peter Petrovitch indignantly. "You paint. So did Vassili Ivanitch, the old baker's son, you know. He tramped about from town to town, touching up old signs, and touching upon

politics too, until he came to a bad end. But are you also a Nihilist?"

"I deny nothing," Ivan replied, "on the contrary, I am willing to enquire into anything, but I believe in progress —"

"It is easy to go too far," the old man interrupted his son. "The progress of Vassili Ivanitch ended in Siberia."

"I painted your portrait and that of my mother," the young fellow replied in order to change the topic of conversation, "and I have the picture with me. I thought it was like you, until I left the mail cart; but either you have changed during the last five years, or else my memory has played me false."

Elizabeth Petrovna insisted on the picture being shown, however; and when it was brought the old man, much to his son's chagrin, suggested that the painting should be given as a wedding present to his cashier. "It is just as much like the young couple as it is like us," Peter Petrovitch remarked, "and besides it will cost nothing."

"I persuaded Maria Fedorovna to come to see us this evening, Peter," Elizabeth Petrovna remarked, as she saw that her son was hurt and indignant.

"Ah! she is the only pretty woman in Voldai, my little son," the old man said affectionately. But when Maria Fedorovna arrived, she proved to be a widow in the thirties, of the Hebraic style of beauty; and she was not slow to let Ivan know how deep her purse was, and how she had mourned for the late lamented, truly, and for a sufficient time.

Ivan Petrovitch did not agree with his father about Maria Fedorovna being the only pretty woman in Voldai; and the following Sunday, when, after attending service, he had reached the church door, he plainly expressed a contrary opinion by asking his mother who was the beautiful girl to whom she had just bowed.

Having learned that the young lady was Theodosia Paulovna, the only child of Dr. Paul Potemkin, the young barrister became promptly indisposed; and when his anxious parents had sent for the doctor, Ivan quickly recovered, and subsequently called upon the medical man to thank him for his kind attentions. In this way he managed to obtain an introduction to Theodosia, which he saw his parents were unwilling to grant him; but the young lady was very formal and stately, and her father remarked that his time was fully occupied when Ivan asked permission to call again.

Voldai, after this, seemed wofully dull; and, in order to break the monotonous routine, Ivan accepted an invitation to the wedding of his father's cashier, to whom Peter Petrovitch had sent the picture, in spite of all his son's protests.

On the morning of the ceremony, Ivan went to the cashier's new abode, and was shown the many presents of clothing, bedding, and furniture, provided by the bride's father; and he noticed his own oil painting hanging beside the sacred pictures, and scarcely knew whether to be annoyed or amused, when he learned that the bridegroom thought that the artist had depicted a couple of saints.

Whilst they were on their way to the bride's abode, the cashier talked of the shrewdness of Peter Petrovitch. The wily merchant had started some gas works, in order that the carpenters could have a good light to labour by. He had made all the men in his employ work long hours, and did not give the usual holidays on saints' days; he paid them little, and that little in permits to obtain goods at his shops; and all the men in his employ knew that they must either work hard for Peter Petrovitch or starve, as he was the only employer of labour at Voldai, and since the Nihilist scare commenced, artisans, were not permitted to move from town to town.

"The master is very clever," the cashier continued. "The peasants who were not absolutely dependent upon him combined to raise the price of the bark which they gather and we use to make gas. Well, the master



MARIA FEDOROVNA

paid the high price demanded. Everyone near Voldai began to collect bark, but the master bought no more. 'Only wait,' said the peasants, 'he must have it.' Then a steamer laden with black stones came from England, and the master began to make gas of that. After this the peasants sold him their stores of bark at half the price he used to pay before they combined; and at that rate he still pays, for the peasants have nothing else to do in the winter except collect bark. Oh! the master is a clever man, and sorrow falls upon those who conspire against him."

They had now reached the scene of the wedding festivities, and they entered and saw the bride sitting in all her splendour. She appeared faint, and no wonder, for the Church allows nothing to pass the bride's lips from the previous sunset until the religious ceremony. After being introduced to the lady in white muslin trimmed with orange blossoms, Ivan noticed the doctor's daughter amongst the guests, and he asked the cashier to let her be his partner in the procession to church. But Theodosia had already chosen her companion; and Ivan looked disappointed and sad all the way to church.

There the bride and bridegroom held lighted tapers in their hands as they stood in front of a small altar. Rings were placed on their fingers, they clasped hands, and the priest led them round the altar three times. A gilt crown was held over the head of each, thrice they drank wine, and thrice they kissed, and the ceremony was over.

Ivan spoke to the cashier, and the latter who was entitled by custom to arrange the order of the procession

to the bride's house, asked Theodosia and Ivan to occupy the position of honour directly after himself and his bride.

Theodosia consented, but with evident reluctance; and whilst they were walking along the highway, Ivan asked her why she avoided him.

"Is it because I was born a serf?" he continued, as she hesitated to reply.

"No," she answered quickly. Then, after



IVAN ASKED THEodosia WHY SHE AVOIDED HIM

a pause, she added boldly, "It is because your father treats those in his power far worse than the lord ever treated his serfs."

"I did not know—I will do my best—that shall all be changed now—" Ivan stammered.

"Well, the change can begin with your father's former rival, Tauloff. The old man was a respectable shopkeeper until your father refused to give employment to any man in Voldai, or to anyone in the village communes around, who dealt at any other shops than those belonging to him and your mother. Tauloff lost his connection, but your father pretended to sympathise with him; then he lent him money, but only in order to take possession of his shop. The contents realized, without the furniture, the amount of his debt; Tauloff removed to the little cottage we shall pass in a moment, and tilled a few acres, using capital borrowed from your father; and now his wife is dying and your father is about to sell all that remains to the poor folks."

"Is my father hard like that to everyone?" Ivan asked.

"Yes," she answered, "he wants all Voldai for himself; and the despotism of the Saratoffs is worse than that of the old lord. He, at least, saw that his "souls" had enough to eat and proper shelter. And now——"

"What does Tauloff owe?" Ivan interrupted her to enquire.

"A hundred gold roubles. Your father lends in paper money, but he bargains to have the loan returned in gold."

"Well, when the dancing begins, I will slip away; and I will try to obtain the money for Tauloff. My father is not really a bad fellow——"

Ivan broke off abruptly. He had been about to mention what his parents had promised him on his marriage; but he was not quite certain that the promise would hold good in all circumstances, if, for instance, he proposed to the girl by his side.

After the feasting at the bride's house, he returned to Voldai, and went to his father. The old gentleman was in high glee, having just received the appointment of mayor of Voldai; and he spoke at length of his hopes and ambitions, which ended only in an hereditary title: so it was some time before Ivan could make known the object of his sudden return.

"Now don't you interfere with me, and

I won't interfere with you," the old man said, when Ivan had pleaded the cause of the poor. "Enjoy yourself while you are young. Here is gold; spend it. Remember we old folks are working for you. All we ask is that you won't hinder our work. Our hands are dirty, yours are clean; keep them so. Before the time for the priest to come and pacify our spirits, we shall have repented, and you will be rich enough to be honest. Night and morning we pray that God may give you health, strength, and rank."

The old man had given Ivan more than enough gold to settle Tauloff's debt; and when he rejoined Theodosia she at once rewarded him with her smiles, and before the wedding festivities were at an end, she had allowed him to win her heart.

During the next few weeks, they often met; and Ivan kept his painting materials at Tauloff's house, because, he said, the light was good there. What he wanted perhaps was the light which beamed from Theo's eyes; for every day the girl came to see Tauloff, who seemed likely soon to follow his wife into the land of spirits; and she was Ivan's model and the source of his inspiration.

These meetings between the young people did not long remain secret. Peter Petrovitch was one of the first to hear of them, and when Ivan told his father that he loved Theodosia, the old man raved, and swore that either Ivan should wed Maria Fedorovna, or be disinherited. Elizabeth Petrovna did her best to make peace between father and son, but only succeeded in bringing about a truce. Ivan and Theodosia continued to visit Tauloff, and Peter Petrovitch waited his time. This came with the Imperial edict, ordering all the communal and private schools in Russia to be closed.

Dr. Potemkin had been one of the young reformers, when liberal-minded men were clamouring for serf emancipation. This being granted, he gave up politics, and settled down to a general medical practice, which was but little more remunerative. To more ardent politicians than himself he was wont to say: "Liberty and education, the foundation of the greatness of a nation, Russia now possesses, thanks to us. Now let us wait to see what she will do for herself."

The doctor probably troubled himself but little about politics after he had settled down at Voldai; but when he read, on

the notice-board of the town, the proclamation, closing all schools except those that had been granted a special permit, he felt indignant, and tore down the bill. There was quite a little excitement at the time, but when the doctor had finished his round amongst his patients, the matter had almost passed from his memory.

However, just when everyone in the house, except himself, had gone to bed, there came a gentle tap at the window. He opened the door and admitted the mayor's official legal adviser, an old friend of the doctor's.

"Hush!" said the visitor, "you are to be arrested in the morning for tearing down the Imperial edict. It is serious — Siberia. Be off at once, and do not compromise me if you are captured."

The Mayor's legal adviser gave the doctor's hand a friendly grasp, and left a little rouleau of gold in his friend's palm; and then he quietly closed the door and hurried away.

Dr. Potemkin sat down, and for some time considered what he had better do. Then he called Theodosia, discussed his plans with her, and before the dawn, when the police came to arrest him, he was far away.

Ivan called, directly he heard of the attempt to arrest the doctor; but Theodosia, who thought that Ivan should have been the person to warn her father, did not receive him very kindly. There was a lovers' quarrel, and Ivan returned home in anything but a good humour. There he was blamed for warning the doctor, though no one had told him, on the previous day, that Dr. Potemkin was to be arrested. Angry words were exchanged between father and son; and that afternoon Ivan received his passport, packed up what belonged to him, and started for the capital.

There he was forced to sell his portrait of Theodosia, which was a clever painting, that could not have been mistaken for the portrait of any saint; and he wrote, at first every day, and then every week, to the girl whom he loved with all the ardour of youth. After a time, as he received no reply, though his own letters were not returned to him, he ceased to write; and he had to work very hard in order to earn

a living, as his parents had refused to give him any assistance, until he returned to marry Maria Fedorovna.

Weeks became months, and months years; and Ivan prospered. People began to speak about his portraits which were painted in the popular French style; and Alexander III. purchased his painting of a rural wedding, and placed it in the Winter Gallery. Then he became a fashionable painter, and could make his own terms.

Theodosia's face seemed to haunt every canvas in Ivan's studio, and she was the bride in the picture which had pleased the Czar; but, though he tried to find her, all his efforts were unavailing. He learned that she had gone to live with Tauloff after her father's disappearance; but after Tauloff's death she had suddenly disappeared.

The evil days of the autumn of 1891 came, bringing famine and fever; and Ivan was still an exile from Voldai. He attended the masked ball given by the officers of the guards for the benefit of the famine fund; and there it was his good fortune to meet Theodosia.

Directly she unmasked, he recognised her; and he took the seat which Dr. Potemkin had vacated as he approached.

"I knew that you were here, and I wished to see you," Theodosia began calmly, taking no notice of Ivan's excitement. "I wish to return good for evil, and I have sent my father away. He has been waiting for his revenge, and it is now within his reach; but though I love him dearly, I am about to rob him of what he has laboured years to obtain. Your father has been guilty of an infraction of the corn laws, and if not warned in time, he will be arrested, disgraced, and perhaps —."

"I have found you again, Theodosia," Ivan began passionately. "You never answered any of my letters. Have you quite forgotten your vows? I would have warned you, as you have warned me, but I did not know in time, my darling."

"I have never received a letter from you," she answered; and explanations, renewed vows, and an adjournment to a quiet corner, where there was a samovar and palms, followed.

Whilst Theodosia poured out the tea,



DR. POTEKIN SAT DOWN.

they agreed that the mayor had intercepted the letters; but now that they had met again, they vowed that nothing should separate them, until the great Father should call one of them home.

The little father—the Czar—takes artists under his special protection; and Ivan felt sure that he could obtain a pardon for Dr. Potemkin, and for Peter Petrovitch if necessary. The doctor had escaped arrest in a way not altogether unusual in Russia. He had purchased, from a dealer in such commodities, the passport of a deceased German physician; and having obtained the same gentleman's diploma for a further pecuniary consideration, he had been able to practise in St. Petersburg, though, of course, not under the name of Potemkin.

When the doctor found Ivan and Theodosia in the tea room, he was surprised, then angry, and finally reconciled to the new state of affairs. Ivan, he said, was to start at once for Voldai; there, all the Saratoff's store of corn was to be given away; and then—why the artist might return to claim his bride.

Ivan found no one waiting for him, next morning, in the posthouse of Voldai; and

when he arrived at his father's house, it was apparently deserted. After knocking for some time, however, he was admitted by his mother. She was ill, but Peter Petrovitch was worse. Typhus fever had stricken him down, and all the household had fled. Elizabeth Petrovna had been too ill to fetch anyone; and, indeed, who would come to a fever-stricken house?

The townspeople and the peasants alike had called the fever the plague; the only resident physician belonged to the army medical staff reserve, and he had been called away to the troops; and even the officials hated the Saratoffs, who had risen from the lowest position to occupy the highest in the town.

Ivan did his best for the sufferers, making them beef-tea and lemonade; then he hastened to the bakery and

ordered the men to give away food to all comers, and painted up a notice that rye flour could be had gratuitously; and before he returned to his parents, he had telegraphed for the doctor and Theodosia.

Voldai was one of the first towns in the empire to suffer from famine and fever. When trade became dull, Saratoff closed



THEODOSIA'S FACE SEEMED TO HAUNT EVERY CANVAS IN IVAN'S STUDIO.

his factory, without making any provision for his men ; directly the export of grain was stopped, he bought a large supply, at the suddenly reduced price ; and when the Czar ordered all holders of grain to sell it at a reasonable price, he abused his power as mayor, in order that nothing might be known about his own stock.

Bread riots became frequent, and the mayor filled the prison ; and there it was that the pestilence first broke out, which was to spread throughout the empire.

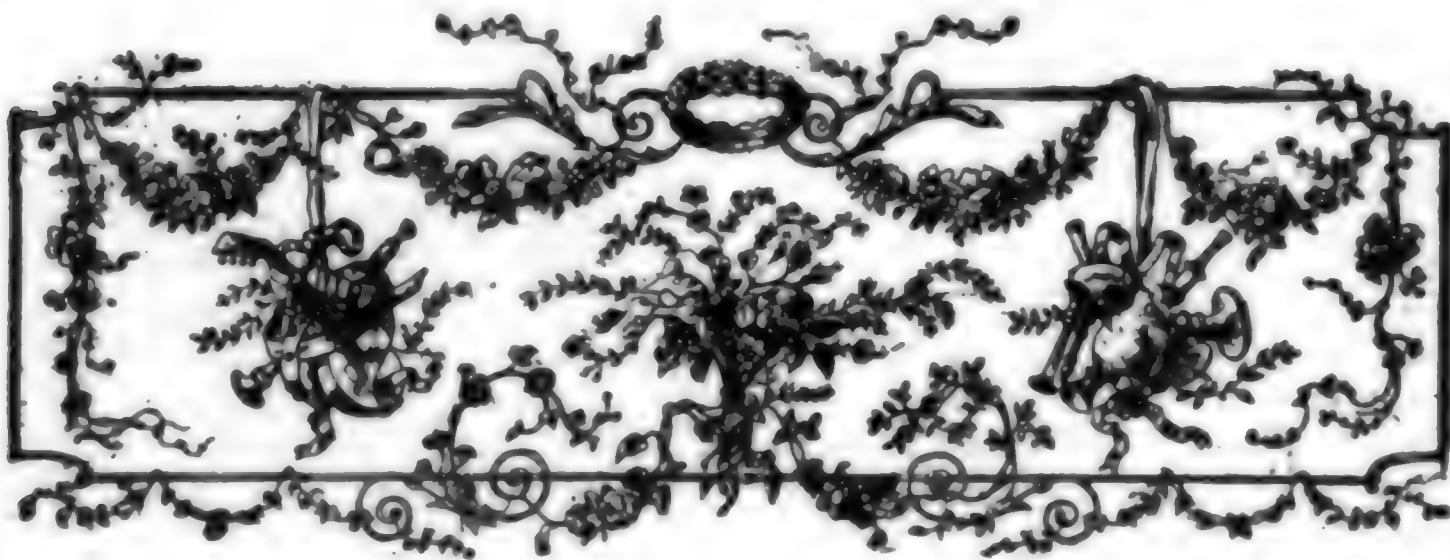
Many deaths occurred, but that of the mayor of Voldai was the first to attract the attention of the press of St. Petersburg. The conduct of Ivan, who gave away his father's large store of corn, and of Dr. Potemkin, who offered his services freely to all, won much praise ; and the Czar forwarded to each the order of St. Catherine, and sent some more physicians to the fever-stricken town.

Ivan's mother recovered, after a long and tedious illness, and the disease gradually became less violent in Voldai, although it raged worse than ever in the district outside the limit which had benefited by the gratuitous distribution of food ; still, when the St. Petersburg press announced how serious the state of affairs was, the censor interfered ; and the Czar himself announced that his physicians had stamped

out the disease, which, like the famine, had always been confined to a very narrow district.

Elizabeth Petrovna had dearly loved her husband, and she could not be persuaded to remain in Voldai : so Ivan made arrangements for the works to be re-opened, in order that there might be employment for all ; and he sent his mother to the South of France, promising to join her there soon after his marriage.

This was celebrated with much pomp in the imperial chapel ; and several members of the royal family graced the ceremony with their presence. The specially trained doves, which in Russia are the sacred symbol of the Holy Ghost, billed and cooed at the right moment ; Theodosia looked very beautiful, holding Ivan's hand, as she walked thrice round the altar in the centre of the church, to signify the conjugal union and the fidelity which should attend their march through life ; and the diamonds of the ladies shone forth with a magic splendour in the midst of the treasures on the walls of the sanctuary, where imperial magnificence deigns to honour the Great Father, and, at the same time takes advantage of the opportunity to proclaim the sacred rights of the Great Father's Vice-regent, the Autocrat of all the Russias.

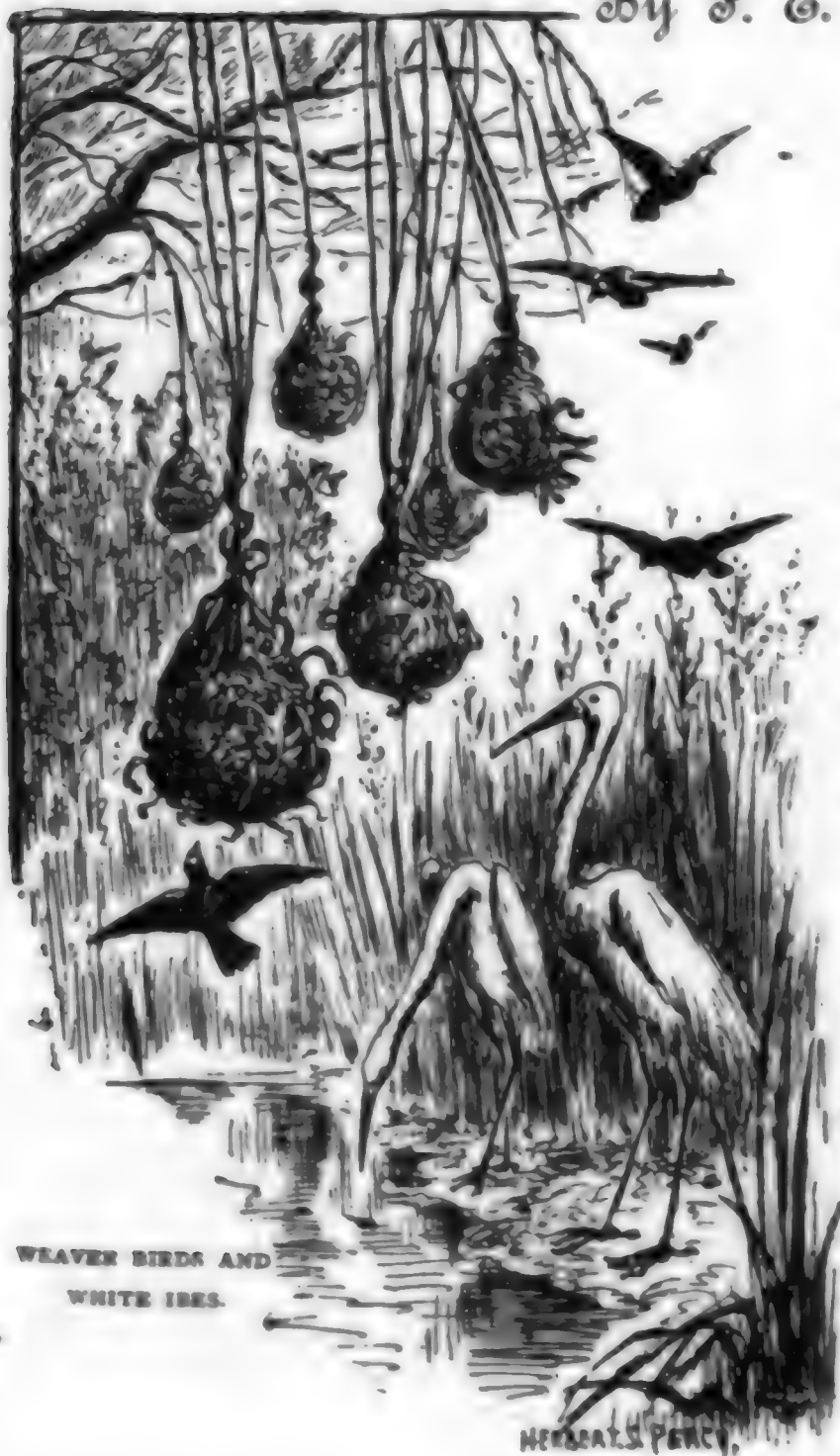




CIRCULAR HUTS IN PALAPYE.

✻ KHAMALAND. ✻

By F. E. Harman.



WEAVER BIRDS AND
WHITE IBIS.

HERBERT S. PERCY.

THE Kalahari Desert, which forms so much of Khamaland, ranks second only to the Sahara in the minds of those to whom African deserts are mere geographical expressions. It is less known and certainly seems more remote, and the sandy haze, which, curtain like, blurs its monotony, makes it seem almost too distantly dim for an interesting appreciation of its reality. Yet, it is not really so very far off, and I hope the matter of this, necessarily, condensed article may show it to be not without interest. A fortnight in a "Union," or "Donald Currie," mail steamer passes only too quickly for a passenger to do much more than sample the cuisine. Rushing, full-speed ahead, from the Solent, across the channel, her sharp bows soon cleave the long swells of the Bay of Biscay; and in a few hours that spot, dreaded by the sea-sick passenger, is passed. Anon, we are at the line, with its flying fish and calms, its rain storms, electrical disturbances, and waterspouts; and then, plunging into the south-east trades, with their lively breezes and white-horsed seas, we sight Table mountain, and are comfortably ashore again at historic Cape Town before we really realize the distance run. A mail train speeding along, now through the magnificent scenery of the Hex river, and then rushing over the bare Kooroo, with its

monotonous sage-bush vegetation, its flocks of sheep and goats, and its tame ostriches, brings us to Kimberley, of diamond fame, and still onward to Vryberg, whence coaches carry the passenger through Mafeking to the new town of Palapye, "the town of the running waters." Less than three weeks have passed since we left smoky London, and now we are on one side of this vast desert, and at the principal town of its most important ruler, Khama. It is hard to say where civilization stops. Certainly not at Cape Town with its fine buildings and roomy hansoms. Nor is the Kimberley Club a whit behind many of our London bachelor fastnesses, and the better shops vie with those of Regent Street. At the temporary terminus, too, at Vryberg, where the rail is but resting awhile in its northward march to let light into the dark continent by the irresistible use of its parallel rails and panting locomotive, we do not find savagedom thrusting itself upon us. Yet, gradually, we realize the fact that we are receding into a wilderness. We flush a Kaffir crane, a sentinel on out-post duty, guarding the entrance to the wilds. Our coach travels where no road is, save by the will of the driver, and the panting team, pressing on at a gallop, flounder through unbridged rivers, and in and out of ruts that threaten every moment to overturn the heavily-laden coach. And how different are these "water splashes" to those of home. Here, hanging from a willow are the nests of the curious weaver-bird, pendulous from the end of a thin branch, down which a snake would not have the temerity to crawl, even for a feast on the seductive eggs, and in and out of the exit, cunningly made at the bottom end of a woven passage, the birds fly gaily. With them, building seems a labour of love, or else they arrive at the necessary skill by a long apprenticeship, for frequently the unfinished and deserted nests far exceed the numbers of those which have been passed by the building committee as fit for the reception of the eggs and the

rearing of the young. Instead, too, of the tame swan and the homely brood of ducks, waddling in the shallows, and quacking remarks of contentment, white ibes stand immovable, and only reluctantly fly away, with slow and heavy wing, at our noisy approach.

Over the wide plains of British Bechuanaland, where not a tree breaks the monotony, we travel at a great rate, passing now and again an up country waggon with its team of sixteen oxen moving like a huge snail over the broad veldt, and often proving a very car of Juggernaut to the curious burying beetle, who, industriously collecting the droppings of the oxen, moulds them into a ball with his rhinoceros horn, and strongly made and curiously fashioned legs, and then, if not prematurely crushed by persistently working in a rut, buries the result of his labour in the moist soil, where it acts, first as an incubator for the eggs, and afterwards as a well stocked nursery for the young beetle grubs. A moment's conversation in Dutch with the driver, who has been awakened by a blast of our cheery horn, is all time allows, and soon far in our rear a tiny speck alone marks the spot where the lumbering vehicle and its slowly moving oxen crawl along. Then we reach the banks of the Crocodile, where palms flourish, and give us a first and only glimpse of tropical vegetation. Large clusters of brown fruit, in size and shape resembling oranges, hang from the branches, and tempt the passer by to taste, and try whether they are eatable or not. To those who like gingerbread, it is dis-



THE WORTHOG OR WILD BOAR.

appointing to find the exterior coating of the hard ivory-like nut tastes somewhat like this school-boy's joy, but so diluted with woody matter, that one comes to the conclusion that nature must in a freak of "cussedness" have adulterated the fruit with sawdust. These palms, which grow both as bushes on the ground and as trees, give a shelter so thick as to form a favourite resort of game, and from it that grand deer, the water buck, whose horns are singular in curving the reverse way to most antelope, may not unfrequently be dislodged. So like are they to donkeys at a first glimpse as they run through the tangled undergrowth, that a tyro travelling up to Mashonaland, with these humble beasts as part of his equipment, may readily be excused if he mistakes the does and younger members of a troop for his own tame friends, galloping off with exuberance of spirits at having dislodged their loads and evaded capture.

A much more serious gentleman to encounter is the worthog, for if chased and brought to bay by dogs, he makes short work of ripping up the unwary "tyke" who does not temper the valour of his attack with discretion. His tusks are formidable weapons, and his temper none of the mildest. A troop of these animals, numbering a score or so, may now and again be met with, rooting about in moist places, and the well directed shot that lays a victim low is the signal for a stampede of the survivors, who make off at a great pace with their tufted tails sticking up straight in the air. Unkind critics of some of the lion story-tellers of South Africa insist that the sportsman who has seen them in such numbers may have mistaken the noble beast for the wild porker, but your critic is ever severe. Very curious does the head of one of these beasts prove to be on examination, as, beside the tusks, which give so formidable a look to his

jaws, he has a couple of curious warts protruding from the cheeks. The head of an old warrior cooked in a veldt oven, made by excavating a hole in the ground and filling it with fire, and later putting in the head encased in clay, is a meal to remember, and is probably as toothsome a morsel as the wilds produce, far surpassing the flesh of the larger antelope, which is but sorry insipid stuff in most cases, excepting, perhaps, the lordly eland. Should

the day be warm and silence reign around, a crocodile may be seen on a sand-bank, lying, log-like, half out of the water, but the least sound is a sufficient hint for it to slide back into the stream, and many a rifle shot may be fired at its almost invulnerable hide, without effect. Even if hit in a vital part a trophy can seldom be secured by a passer by, as the body sinks at once. If sufficient time is permitted, something may be done in the way of fishing. I have caught a beautiful species of perch with its characteristic bars made more striking by trout-like spots studding the sides, which unhesitatingly took the bait in a clear, sandy pool, in which the noonday sun shone with an undimmed splendour through the rare air. Under bushes, and where the water is thicker, fine catfish lie, and grow to a great size. They afford good sport with strong tackle—generally the driver's whip will do for



KAFFIR CRANE.

a rod — of the "pull baker, pull devil" order, and they seem almost spoiling for a fight. Then there are other species rather more shy, with beautiful, large, silver scales but indifferent culinary qualities, who are not satisfied with an ordinary backbone and appendages, but have extra forked bones that render their mastication to the hungry traveller about as unsatisfactory as the handling of a prickly pear without gloves. Curiously enough, the Bechuanas do not eat fish, so that the chance of getting a bag is not diminished by the local angler.



KHAMAS TRYING PRISONERS.

But the post-cart road soon leaves the river, separating the Transvaal from Khamaland, and enters a country covered for the most part with small trees, which grow over the vast wastes of the Kalihari, westward for many a mile, and through whose light shade the pioneers cut a road, northward and eastward, to Fort Salisbury, which has already been traversed by over three thousand white people *en route* to the new Eldorado. While some of the trees resemble the small oaks of our coppices, others have beautiful, silvery leaves. Here life seems to concentrate itself at the water holes, be they pools in sandy river beds, springs or *vleis*, in which the rain water collects, and remains through the ground becoming puddled by the oxen and antelope frequenting them. Hardly disturbed by day, towards evening they are the rendezvous for all living things. The ducks and wading birds which have haunted them in uninterrupted happiness, are joined by the beautiful sand grouse, known as the "Namaqua partridge," which, flying with extreme rapidity, alights on the sand close to the water, where, from its similarity of colour to the ground, it requires a sharp eye to detect its presence, and the amount of water in the neighbourhood may fairly be judged by the number of these birds. Other kinds of partridges come running in, with no less quick-legged frankolins ;

pigeons and doves flutter down ; and, later, the leopard and lion, the jackal and hyæna come to drink, and, haply, make a supper on the antelope, quagga, or other dainty quadruped.

How hard must be the struggle for life with some of the smaller carnivora may be judged by the fact that on more than one occasion, when outspanned for the night, I have had the hard leather thongs, used to fasten the bullocks to the yoke, eaten by the jackals ; and on another night a hyæna ate nearly the whole of the hide of a quagga that had been cut into a strip for a rope, and stretched, partly over a tent in which I was sleeping, and partly by a good blazing fire.

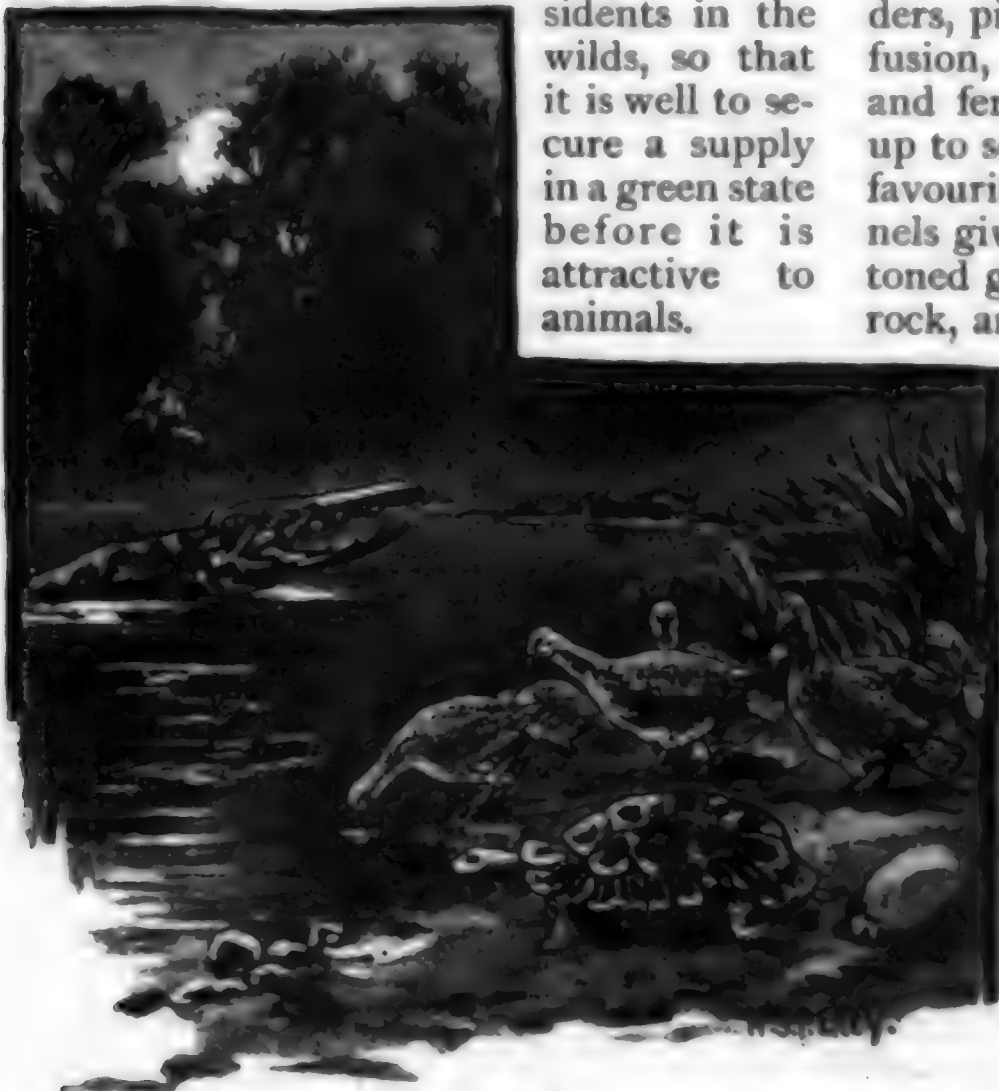
The carnivorous birds, too, require a share, and the asvogel, or vulture, whirling high in the firmament and then descending on a carcase is a frequent sight. Very wisely, the chief prohibits these birds being killed, as they serve as scavengers around his town.

Nor, among the candidates for water and flesh, must I omit the bushmen, although they are by no means dependent on water visible at the surface of the ground. Their knowledge of woodcraft is unsurpassed, and they eke out that often scarce commodity, moisture, by unearthing bulbs and tubers, the existence of which none but themselves

could detect. On one occasion one of them showed me, with great joy, a small insignificant creeping plant, not unlike the bind-weed of our fields, but only having three tiny leaves on its stem of perhaps a foot in length. Then he commenced digging up the sand around it with his hands and a bit of stick culled from the nearest bush. In a short time he extracted from the ground a tuber, weighing probably, six or eight pounds, and looking, when cleaned, like a mass of firm, white jelly. It was tasteless, and practically a lump of water. On other occasions I have been glad to use small, wild water-melons, which grow in extensive patches here and there, which, if not as pleasant to consume as a glass of fresh, bubbling, icy-cold spring-water from a fern-shadowed glen in a mountain side, answered the same purpose.

I must also pay a tribute to a fruit externally resembling a large orange, which has a hard shell enclosing a brown pulp, in which are embedded some hard seeds. The pulp, which tastes like essence of pear-drops, is excellent, and much appreciated by many re-

sidents in the wilds, so that it is well to secure a supply in a green state before it is attractive to animals.



CROCODILE, TORTOISE AND NAMAQUA PARTRIDGES



ASVOGELS FEEDING.

As the road proceeds northward we pass hills of granite, formed, sometimes, of a single mass of stone, smooth and bare, on which lively lizards, with red heads and brilliant green tails, scuttle about on the warm surface, and bask in the sunshine, but more often of a mass of enormous boulders, piled one on another in fantastic confusion, and, between the interstices, trees and ferns, and a mixed vegetation spring up to soften down the angles. These are favourite resorts of baboons, whose sentinels give notice of our approach in a deep-toned grunt that reverberates from rock to rock, and may be heard miles away. Noisy

fellows they are, as when disturbed they jump from branch to branch, their weight as they descend bending their momentary resting place, and its release at their next leap leaving it to rebound with noisy clashing. The pretty little buck, the klipspringer, also haunts these hills, and may be picked off at a hundred or two hundred yards by a well-directed shot of a sportsman, who can stalk it quietly. Its hair is peculiarly short and close, serving admirably for the stuffing of an ill-padded saddle.

But we must not linger longer in the wilds. Let us take a glimpse at the native town of

Palapye, the capital of the Kalahari, and the residence of the Alfred the Great of our times—the Chief Khama. We hear a good deal of the enterprise of the white man in building towns of considerable size in the wild west; and in Africa, Johannesburg is pointed at with pride, as indicative of Anglo-Saxon energy; but it may not be uninteresting to learn that the Kaffir, when well governed, can do very creditable work in the same way. For years the tribe of the Bamangwatos had their capital at Shoshong, some seventy miles away, at a rocky, arid spot, where water was so scarce, that, day and night, without intermission, the women toiled up a sandy cloof, and waited their turn to get a scanty pittance from little pits, into which it slowly filtered from the adjoining hills. But the land-grabbing Boer on one side, and the fierce Matabele on the other, forbade this less warlike race to forsake a mountain fastness, until British influence became a fact, and the Bechuanaland Border Police took up a position to hold either party in check. Then Khama decided that the time had come for a move to more comfortable quarters. The order went forth, and hey, presto! the entire population of some five and twenty thousand people migrated,



WATER BUCK.

with all their Lares and Penates, and settled on an area of some twenty miles square, which is now the town of Palapye. The thoughtful chief ordered the journey in the best season for travelling, and on arrival at the spots assigned to each family they were only allowed to erect temporary shelters, so that no time might be wasted in getting in the necessary crops on the surrounding land. The next year permanent huts were erected, of large dimensions, with brick

walls and verandahs, and surrounded by neat enclosures, either of sun-dried mud walls, pierced with loopholes, or carefully arranged reeds or closely woven branches. The town is divided into many parishes, each ruled over by a head man, who is responsible for its morals and politics; and if the chief has any reason to suppose things are not as they should be, the entire parish is pulled down or burnt, and re-erected on another spot more under his personal supervision.

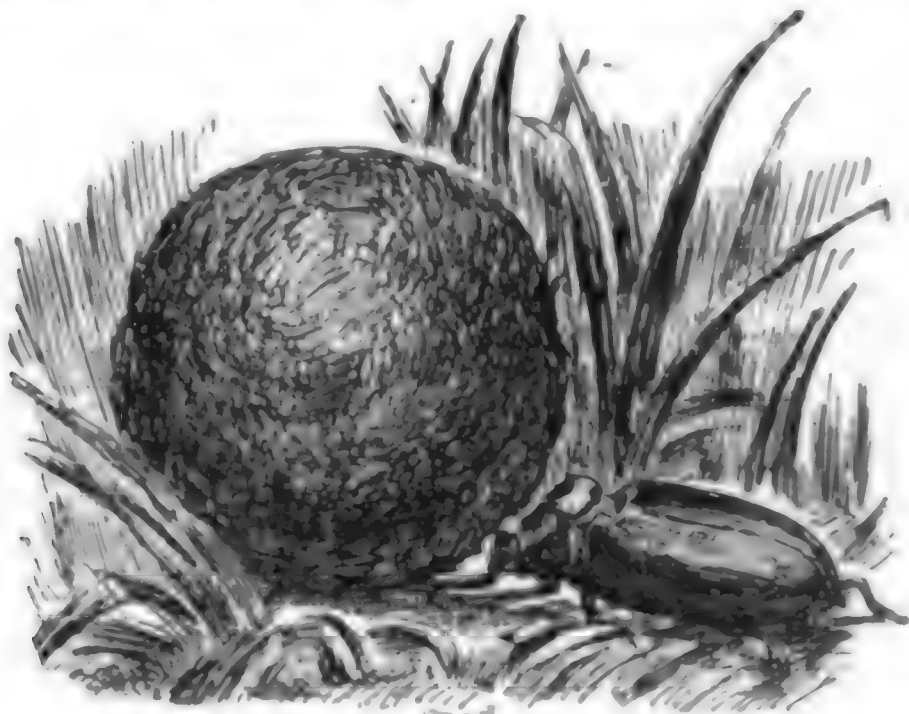
The most striking feature of the place, to a stranger, is the circular form of everything. The parishes are enclosed by circular fences, and, ranged round them, are a number of large circular huts, so arranged as to leave a large open space in the centre. In the middle of this is a semi-circular screen, erected to keep off the prevailing wind, and in this, around a fire, which is generally burning in the cold weather, the parish council and male gossips assemble. The women are not allowed to violate this spot; but their merry voices from the adjacent private enclosures, where they are engaged in pounding corn and other domestic duties, forbid the thought that they find this a privation. Nor are they allowed to roam about after night-fall, and as each parish enclosure has but a single opening, they



THE QUAGGA.

cannot easily evade observation. Probably no town is kept in order with so slight a visible show of authority, for during the some five-and-twenty years Khama has ruled, he has only twice inflicted capital punishment. Yet no firmer or juster monarch exists. When a young man, his father wished him to marry more than a single wife. Khama refused, and, retiring to the veldt, was joined by most of the young men of the tribe. On their sending for their wives their request was refused, thereupon they stormed the town, and, after a sanguinary fight, recovered their families, and deposed the chief, whom Khama, subsequently, with great clemency, restored to power. On a more recent occasion one of his brothers tried to provoke civil war. Contemptuously, Khama gave him a few hours' notice to clear out of the country, and, I believe, simply confiscated his cattle. While Khama does not insist on Christianity, he is himself a strong exponent of it, and many of his people attend church, and have shown their appreciation of missionary labour by subscribing over three thousand pounds towards the erection of a substantial place of worship. He is, moreover, not only a strict teetotaler himself, but insists on his people being so. For a time he permitted Kaffir beer to be concocted, but as he found it was adulterated with bad brandy, "Cape smoke," smuggled across the border, he was forced to insist on its suppression, and now no alcoholic liquor of any description is allowed in his country. Only those who know the intense injury the abuse of alcoholic drinks brings on Kaffir races can appreciate his firmness. One of my most pleasing reminiscences of lengthy travels

amongst the races under his sway is their honesty, if, as is usually the case, one engages servants with his consent. At times it becomes almost burdensome, as things thrown away may be found carefully preserved in some odd corner of one's waggon weeks afterwards. Not an event of any moment transpires in the chief's country without his being immediately made acquainted with it by messengers, who start on an errand at a moment's notice, and travel immense distances without showing signs of fatigue. Their favourite letter bag is a cleft stick. Daily he is to be met with in his Kothla, or council enclosure, dealing out justice, hearing the reports of his head men, and carrying on the administration of a vast tract of country; then riding, with a good seat, he rapidly journeys where he considers his presence may be necessary. A firm friend to British rule, he has allowed stores to be opened in his capital, with the result that his people are fast discarding bead ornaments and skin dresses, and taking to European clothing. On the arrival of waggons, with supplies, there is frequently a great concourse of people awaiting the opening of the store. For these occasions his policemen arrive, armed with a bundle of switches, and every few minutes, while trade is brisk, vigorously belabour the customers crowding at the counter, in order that there may be no delay by a mere inspection and handling of the goods, and now and again clear out the whole of the customers, amidst roars of chaff and good-humoured laughter. Verily shopping is conducted in Khama's capital more expeditiously than in Her Most Gracious Majesty's dominions.



BURYING BEETLE.



CHAPTER I.



"GENTLEMEN," said the speaker, "are we agreed?"

They rose to their feet as one man. "We are agreed," they said.

The speaker looked round, and raised a glass to his lips. The beverage appeared to

inspire him.

Below, in busy Fleet Street, a rattle of cabs, bearing belated people homewards, broke the silence. Immediately opposite, flared the electric light of a great daily paper—great that is if bulk constitutes greatness.

After a few moments' silence, the Professor once more raised the glass to his lips. "I drink," he said, with deliberation, "to the success of 'John Jones.'"

"To the success of 'John Jones,'" they said, emptying their glasses.

"Perhaps," said a slim, sandy-haired young man, with a timid, deprecating manner, "Perhaps the Professor will kindly explain the situation."

"With pleasure," said the Professor, as he glanced round the sparsely furnished room, and emitted huge clouds of smoke from his meerschaum.

"Really, gentlemen, I—I really must protest against such a scandalous waste of time. Ah—the—ah—majority of us, I have been led to believe, possess at least a modicum of common sense and—"

"Mr. Jonas D. Rangle," said the Pro-

fessor crushingly, "please to sit down. Your objections and socialistic seditious are all very well in our novel, but they are not in order here, sir."

Jonas D. Rangle sat down; but he looked far from crushed.

"You are aware," said the Professor, addressing the gathering, "that, practically, the world of fiction has long been monopolized by a chosen few—men who are but wrecks of their former selves, but whom the British public worship simply because they have always done so."

"We are aware," said the six people appealed to.

"Of course," said the Professor, "it is morally wrong. But then there are many things morally wrong in this world. It has been reserved to us to astonish the world with—'John Jones.'"

He paused.

"Have we astonished the world?" sceptically inquired that dashing young barrister, Danby Green.

"You are too impulsive," coldly returned the Professor. "The verdancy of your name clings to you still. Allow me to proceed."

Danby Green bowed.

"We felt," said the Professor, "that what the world wanted was, if I may put it crudely, a startler. Anyone can write a novel. What we wanted was to produce a work which should be startlingly original, and yet unlike the productions of the two or three younger men who have pervaded literature almost as much as the old ones. In short, we required something which should take the ordinary reader into an

entirely new sphere. We have done this. Night after night have we sat together, compounding, expounding, deliberating, discussing, pruning. The result is this great work, 'The Beginning and the End, by John Jones.' All the experiences of our several lives have been laid bare in its pages. Long lives some of us have lived, short lives some; but in the pages of the 'Beginning and the End,' we have lavished the enthusiasm and glamour of life in its spring-time, and the discernment and caution—the worldly coldness and the calm of ripe experience only acquired in old age. The result has been—well, startling. But, before I go any further, I wish to remind you of one thing."

They listened, all attention.

"It is understood that under no circumstances are we to reveal who is responsible for any particular portion of the work. We are to go down to our graves burdened with the whole responsibility of this tremendous experiment. Each of us, in his heart, probably loathes the six parts he did not write. That doesn't matter. We are pledged to accept whatever praise or blame may be allotted to us for this new departure. If any man come to you and praise you softly for such and such a portion, do not reveal whether you wrote it or not; if any man chastise you with scorpions or brickbats for another portion, accept them with meekness, or retaliate vigorously; but neither affirm nor deny. I trust I have made my meaning clear to you. The conditions are embodied in this document. We will now sign. Perhaps, as Professor of General Utility, I had better sign first, then Digby Cole, Jonas D. Rangle, Ruthin Dare, Lincoln Summerfield, Danby Green, and last, but not least, Dudley Venne.

They all signed, each thinking that the document would be exhibited one day in the British Museum, as a curiosity. They had been shallow, learned, brainless, deep, vindictive, magnanimous, mean, impulsive, cautious, esoteric, exoteric, and incongruous by turns. Each man, instead of concealing his own individuality, had betrayed it. The result was a work so *bizarre*, so startling, that it created a *furor* in the land.

CHAPTER II.

At the meeting on the next evening, Dudley Venne was unusually thoughtful and reserved. The plebeian name of "John Jones" filled the mouths of men. There was no escaping from it. All the papers

gave long extracts from the book; even the servants read it; and one man had been run over in Cheapside, studying it under the noses of omnibus horses, and unable to look up from its enthralling pages. "Bury it with me," were his last words. There seemed to be something in it which suited everyone; and each man called his neighbour a fool for liking the part for which he (the first man) did not care. At the "Savage Club," all the men talked "Jones"; and nineteen in every twenty of them were prepared to tell you "in confidence, dear boy—mustn't let it go any further—but I—I wrote that book. If so and so tells you he did, don't believe a word of it." A certain column in a very vigorous evening paper (so called because it always appeared in the morning) devoted a leader to proving that Lord Salisbury was the author of this stupendous work. Then another revered statesman paused, in the height of a political campaign, to write a post-card containing two or three hundred words of eloquent criticism about the new book. That settled it. There was a "John Jones Polka in the air; the "King of the Costers" wrote a song about it, with which the Music Halls re-echoed every night; and, finally, a West-end tailor christened a new striped material with the thrilling title of "The John Jones inexpressibles—as worn by the author." To use an Americanism, "John Jones" had come to stay—for the season at least.

But all these things were as nothing to the culminating glory which awaited the authors of "John Jones," viz., an invitation to a dance and supper from "The Bookworms"—an invitation which was annually given to the author of the best book of the year.

The President read out the invitation amid breathless silence.

"'The Bookworms,'" observed the President, with solemnity, "have the best cook in London. Moreover, they are the Alpha and the Omega of literature—the literary dictators of the republic of letters. It would be a crime to refuse their magnificent hospitality. Let us dance with them."

"Mr. President: You will notice," said Jonas D. Rangle, arising, "that they request *his* company. Now, there is but one John Jones, but that one represents seven rather active appetites at a banquet."

"True, Mr. Rangle," said the President, scrutinizing the invitation card. "True; we must remedy this."

After a lengthy discussion, Lincoln



"TO THE SUCCESS OF 'JOHN JONES.'"

Summerfield, the brilliant young journalist of the company, whose general all round knowledge of things, from a church congress to a prize fight, had been of immense assistance to the novelists, wrote the following letter to "The Bookworms":—

"John Jones presents his compliments to 'The Bookworms,' and considers it a great honour to accept their kind invitation to their dance, on the 30th. He would, however, point out that he comprises seven individuals. If 'The Bookworms' care to burden themselves with so many fractions, and will extend their invitation to the seven of him, he will have much pleasure in accepting it."

"The Bookworms" answered that they would be delighted to honour such an aggregation of talent. That settled it.

On the fateful evening, "John Jones" all met together, and passed in critical review order before the President.

"At one time," observed that worthy feelingly, we "couldn't have mustered three dress suits between us. Such glossy continuations," he glanced at Venne's long legs, "are inexpressibly touching. Now, gentlemen, the carriages are at the door. Remember our compact. Let not the seductions of the wine-cup cause any of you

to break it; let not the siren singing of the lady guests of 'The Bookworms'—the butterfly com-

panions of those dusty grubs—lure from us the whole truth."

The first person that attracted "John Jones'" attention on his arrival at "The Bookworms" was Miss Celia Glynn, who really looked bewitchingly beautiful, as she stood with her back to the large oblong mirror in the reception room. Miss Celia Glynn worshipped literary people. And there is no worship like the worship of literature when a girl is the devotee. Usually this hero worship does not last long; but it blazes with a fierce flame while it does burn. And it re-kindles quickly and flares fervently when transferred to another hearth.

The principal "Bookworm" stepped toward Miss Glynn, as she fanned herself rapidly, and tried to look quite at ease. He was followed by a curious assortment of male humanity. The high colour in Miss Glynn's cheeks rose still higher, for she knew that the ponderous gentleman with the golden locks must be the famed "John Jones." But who were these that followed in his train?

"Miss Glynn, permit me to introduce to you Mr. John Jones."

Miss Glynn bowed with lowly reverence. This was really the hero at last. Rather stout—a little too old—sort of made-in-Germany look about him, but the hero!—the author whose pages she had devoured! (she had read the book three times)—her bright particular star of literature! She bowed low and long.

"Mr. John Jones,—Miss Glynn," again said the smiling "Bookworm."

Miss Glynn glanced up. A tall, thin, elderly gentleman, with something of a military stamp about him, stood bowing before her. Miss Glynn bowed, and slightly wondered.

"Mr. John Jones,—Miss Glynn," again said the principal "Bookworm."

Miss Glynn gave a startled look towards the introducer. A benign expression still suffused his unruffled countenance, and she bowed to the sprightly little gentleman with the pointed beard who stood before her. By this time, she was sorely troubled. There were too many "John Jones's." Was the principal making fun of her? Why so many "John Jones"? But she bowed low. He seemed to be introduced in serial form.

"Mr. John Jones,—Miss Glynn."

Miss Glynn stood bolt upright; her eyes flashed fire; the rose in her black hair trembled. It was clear that a practical joke was being played upon her; she was not the girl to be treated thus with impunity. Looking severely at the Principal she said:—

"Mr. Principal, excuse me," glancing down the line of handsome young men who tailed the Jones procession, "I—I will take the rest as read." And there she stood, the image of indignant beauty.

The amiable Principal could not repress his genial laugh; and it came. A smile rippled along the line.

"I go no further—whew, what a magnificent girl!" Dudley Venne said to himself.

Then, as the line filed down the room, he stepped out of his place and, going to her side, said:—

"You did not wait till my turn came. I'm one of 'the rest.' My name is John Jones!"

CHAPTER III.

Miss Glynn stared straight ahead of her with sublime unconsciousness. To all intents and purposes, she was alone. Dudley Venne felt this; but he was not easily repulsed. He was resolved to know her. With a bravery worthy of the Victoria Cross, he repeated his remark: I am one of the rest; I am 'John Jones.'"

Miss Glynn still seemed to be profoundly interested in the ceiling.

"I am one of him; I am a fractional portion of 'John Jones,'" said Dudley Venne, unflinchingly.

Miss Glynn continued to explore the ceiling.

"A seventh of him," said Venne.

Miss Glynn looked slowly round at Dudley Venne. Then she said with freezing hauteur: "Did you speak to me?"

"I merely said—mentioned, in fact—that I am one of 'the rest'—that is, 'John Jones.' You said you would take 'the rest'—as read, I believe, so I concluded that was an introduction. Thought—I—should like to speak to you, you know. I wanted to say it's—it's rather warm here—a very warm corner, isn't it?"

Miss Glynn looked at the speaker for an instant. Dudley Venne had spoken the truth. He, at least, was exceedingly warm just then.

He is a brave man who can fearlessly step up to a handsome, angry woman and introduce himself, even though he has been taken "as read." But there are men who can survive the most scathing look of unutterable scorn with calmness, and gently enquire of the scorner whether she does not think that it is really a beautiful day? and would it not be a blessing if the weather continued so for a time? This is true bravery. Unobtrusive but real.

Dudley Venne was brave for the moment. He wanted to make Miss Glynn's acquaintance, and he had been partially introduced.

Miss Glynn looked thoughtful. "Would the fractional part of an introduction be sufficient?" she enquired.

"Undoubtedly. I'm not an individual *ego*. I'm only a seventh."

"I scarcely follow your meaning. It does not appear to me to be even the seventh of sense. May I ask you for an explanation?"

"By all means. Won't you sit down? It will take time."

He brought her a chair. Miss Glynn sat down. She was fascinated by his superb impudence, and was rather inclined to hear an explanation of the gathering together in that room of so many "John Jones's."

Dudley Venne fetched a chair for himself. "With your permission," he said. "Or shall I stand?"

She motioned him with her fan to be seated. "According to your statement," she said, "you are only entitled to a seventh of a chair; but I will be generous—you shall have a whole one."

"Ah! but," he said seriously, seating himself, "that's the curious part of it. We are fractions; and yet each fraction is the whole. In speaking to you, I am doing so

on behalf of my—what's that long French word?"

"*Collaborateurs*, I presume?" she said, smiling in spite of herself.

"Thank you. It's as blessed a word as 'Mesopotamia.' You're sure you care to hear the story? I don't want to be egotistical."

She languidly waved her fan in time to the silvery splashing of a fountain near. "Quite; it promises to be even more interesting than I had expected."

"You're very good. We started with a theory."

"Who are 'we'?"

"We (pardon my grammar)—we are 'John Jones.' It's so difficult, I don't know where to begin," he continued.

"At the beginning," she quietly suggested.

"Thanks. I will. We were seven men with seven brooms, and the world was our carpet. We all started separately, and the carpet—I speak metaphorically."

"Quite so, Mr. Septimus John Jones."

"Thank you, so much," he exclaimed enthusiastically; "that was a flash of genius. You have given me an identity. Now I shall know myself from the others."

She looked pleased. "It was very simple," she said. "You were the seventh and last. But—the story!"

"Oh, the story," he said helplessly. "Yes, the story. Well, we found we didn't make much impression separately. But you know the childish saying, 'if all the trees in the world were one tree, what a big tree that would be?'"

"Yes!"

"Well, we were seven stunted little shrubs."

"I—I should hardly call number one stunted," she said.

"Ah, that's what becomes of using metaphors. As a matter of fact he's rather overgrown. Well, we thought, or one of us thought, that if separately we hadn't enough individuality to command attention, perhaps if we were all bound up together in one work we might succeed, and—" he hesitated.

"And?"

"And the result was him—'John Jones.'"

She looked at him curiously. He was brave—she knew that. He had proved it a few minutes ago. Then his factitious bravery had vanished. She knew that she attracted him; that he was as wax in her hands; or would be shortly, if she chose. She had often read of that kind of thing in novels—particularly in her own. The man's face was pure, his brow high, his eyes flashed

with a noble purpose. She imagined that he was a man who had never had his chance in the world. Possibly, a poor man. Undoubtedly, a clever one, or he would never have hit upon (she felt convinced that he had originated it) so singularly daring an expedient. Now, he had compelled the world's attention (Miss Glynn had not been very favourably impressed by the other six fractions of "John Jones"), and she felt that he was worthy of it. But—her train of thought came to an abrupt conclusion. "Mr. Septimus," she said, "I should like to ask you something about 'John Jones.'"

The time had come. "John Jones" was going to lead to complications. Something horrible would be sure to happen. He could only bow, and await her questioning.

"I must explain," she said, "that I have read 'John Jones' with the greatest interest. The author seemed to me to be the strangest man in the whole world. Now, his strangeness is accounted for by the fact that he is not one man but seven men; that there are seven conflicting individualities in the book."

He bowed.

"I can follow the workings of five of your seven minds in the novel. I see clearly the different threads of thought running through the pages from beginning to end, each thread laying bare the soul of that particular author. Now there are only two threads of individualities that interest me. The others are not so sharply defined and are of indifferent interest; in fact, nonentities. I feel that you are one of the two that interest me."

"Don't be too sure," he suggested. "Perhaps I am one of the nonentities."

"Impossible," she said, with feminine firmness. "Impossible. You are either a man I despise, or—"

"Or?" he queried eagerly.

She did not falter, but looked him steadily in the face. Her eyes shone with a sweet light, and she answered softly, as if speaking through him, to someone beyond. "Or," she said, "the one man whom of all others I have longed to meet."

The mere suggestion bewildered Venne.

"You *must* answer my question," she said, with gentle insistence, as if she had no doubt whatever of his reply. "You *must* tell me. Which side did you take of that discussion on the Church and the Poor, so vividly written in volume III. of the novel?"

Dudley Venne hesitated. She was so strangely sweet and sweetly strange, that he felt he could follow her to the world's end.

But he had made a solemn compact with his companions; he could not break his word. Her fan touched him almost caressingly.

"Tell me," she said. "I have no doubt. Do you think a woman's instinct deceives her? I only want to hear it from your own lips."

He rose, and stood looking hopelessly down upon her splendid beauty. "Don't ask me," he said; "I daren't tell. I have known you for years and years—have dreamed of you for years. Once you held a laurel wreath in your hand and I called you 'Fame.' And now I have found a sweeter name for you still if only I——"

He broke off, surprised at his own intensity. He had quite forgotten the ridiculous side of the situation.

"If only what?" she enquired, rising in her turn.

The fountain plashed musically. Above the murmur of the water as it fell in the marble basin, rose the low, sweet strains of a waltz.

People were thronging into the room. "You cannot answer?" she said, a change coming over her expressive features.

"It is a solemn promise," he said. "We are *all* responsible for every word of that book. I have given my word; if it meant death to me, I could not recall it."

She did not appear to be angry. Her white satin slipper tapped the floor for a moment. "Then I must find out the truth without your assistance," she said thoughtfully. "Here comes my aunt; she has neglected me for some time. Auntie, this gentleman is Mr. Septimus John Jones."

"Auntie's" disappointment was manifest. "There's only one Jones now," she said sadly; "and his name is John."

"But this is part of 'John,'" brightly said Miss Glynn—"a seventh."

"Auntie's" eyes expressed incredulity.

Just then a tall, military-looking man, with a gardenia in his button-hole, came up. "Aw, Miss Glynn," he said, "Aw, can you—aw—find woom for me on your progwamme?"

"Presently, Captain D'Arcy," she said, in friendly tones. "I am dancing very little to-night."

"Aw," said the Captain, speaking in curiously brief, disconnected gasps. "Aw—awf'lee hard lines, bai Jove. Too much bwain, Miss Glynn—to—aw—too much bwain. You—aw—don't welax."

Dudley Venne trembled at his own audacity. "I believe this is our dance?"

he said, imploringly, to Miss Glynn.

"Yes, Mr. Jones," she replied, almost softly, "I—I think it is."

The Captain had already inscribed his initials on Miss Glynn's card, and looked extremely disgusted as Venne led her towards the ball-room. "Aw," he said disdainfully,—"Aw—scwibbling cad, and all that sort of thing. Not a name on her



MISS GLYNN LISTENED TO HIS EXPLANATION.

card, doncherknow!"

But Venne and Miss Glynn were floating round the room, Venne in a delirium of delight. And the Captain had to take "Auntie" back to the ball-room and pretend to enjoy it, although the mono-syllable which issued from his lips somewhat belied the rest of his remarks.

CHAPTER IV.

There are two classes of people of widely different temperament but strangely similar in action, who begin a task without the slightest delay; and these classes may be designated under the titles of the "Now or Never," and the "Now and For ever." Impatience is the actuating characteristic of the first, determination of the second. Dudley Venne was an out and out "Now and For ever." The whole meaning of any

given combination of circumstances focussed itself instantly on his intelligence ; he made up his mind what line of action to pursue, without a moment's delay. Once determined, he fought the matter through to the finish on that line without a thought of defeat. As he floated around the room, keeping time to the dreary music that throbbed through the great hall, the circumstances and events of the evening passed before him like a dream. First and foremost, the magnificent girl he held in his arms—and the peculiar introduction that was really no introduction at all. As yet she had never heard his real name, for, like the little heroine of Wordsworth's poem, he was only one of seven. Then the thought of the distinguished honours that had been heaped upon him as the seventh of a great whole, played across his mind, and led him back to the days of semi-poverty in the suburbs—those days of literary longings and strivings that were now realized in a brilliant, but unsatisfactory, manner. After minutely canvassing these things, he suddenly asked himself what was to be the outcome of them all. Here he was in the very midst of a whirlpool of circumstances. What part should he play? Was he to be simply whirled helplessly round, only to be swept farther and farther from the centre of events until he finally grounded on the shore of insignificance, a poor, played-out hero, while some stronger man took his place, and led the beautiful girl he now led through the dances of some equally glorious evening?

The more Dudley Venne thought of Miss Glynn, the more she seemed the ideal of his life, the materialized spirit of that mystical literary and artistic world to which he had so often yearned to belong. Should he let this ideal slip from him into the darkness of separation? No! In his quick-witted, unhesitating way, he determined to propose to her that very night.

"Are you satisfied with your triumphs, Mr. Septimus John Jones?" asked Miss Glynn, towards the end of the night, or, rather, the commencement of dawn. They had again found their way to the conservatory, "Auntie" consoling the *ennui* of the, to her, slowly passing hours by frequent visits to the supper room.

"No," said Venne, as he stood looking at her. "Did you ever know a man who was satisfied—unless—"

"Unless what?"

"Unless he could think himself of some importance in your eyes."

"But then I'm a very insignificant being indeed."

"Oh, let us be frank," he said. "When a man wants something as much as I do, he can't fence and pay pretty compliments. He forgets—"

"That he is a seventh?" she asked.

"No. He forgets everything but you. I am going to tell you something which you will probably think rather awful."

"Then only tell me a seventh," she suggested.

"We've never met before. Never. And yet this meeting has shaped my whole life. I love you."

"What!"

"Yes. There it is. The bald fact. I can't keep it from you. You're the woman of my dreams—my—my ideal."

"It's very sudden. Have you—have you had many ideals?" she asked.

"No," he said. "I am quite frank with you. I haven't. Hitherto, I have always been very poor. Now I have set my foot on the neck of the world, and I'm going to keep it there, unless—"

"Unless?"

"Unless you'll put your pretty foot on my neck."

"My idea of a woman is one who raises her husband," she said.

"I'm desperately in earnest. I love you. I have never loved before. You're a revelation to me."

"It is very sudden."

"Oh, yes! All great revelations are. Just think what it is to feel your life unfinished, and then to meet someone and know in a second that she comprises it all. There's nothing more to be said. No other woman in the world will ever be to me what you are, though I've only seen you once."

"But—the conventionalities," she said.

"Oh! that isn't *you* speaking. You've a soul. If you love me, I could almost see it grow. I have my chance. I am going to do something in the world, but I can't do it without you. I have fought the world and conquered it. You've conquered me. If I can't win you, it isn't worth while making a name for myself. Ambition is all Dead Sea Fruit without you."

Miss Glynn listened with flushed cheeks and slightly parted lips. The man was handsome as Apollo. He was a strong man—a literary Sampson. And yet she



IT'S ONLY THE MAD WHO ARE SANE.

had overthrown him. She had always wanted a mission ; and, oh ! what greater mission could there be for a woman than to love a man, and share his name ? His name ! Ah-h-h ! That ended it. He hadn't a name. The coils of fate were tightening round them both. Her life had been so empty, and now—now—now it might be filled to the brim ! What should she do ?

"I——"

"Auntie" loomed on the horizon ; she seemed to have swelled considerably.

"I—I can't decide all at once—here—in such a place," she said. "I—I will think—think about it. I—I never met anyone like you before. I must go."

"Yes," he said, "think about it. I don't fence or phrase, or make any conditions. I'm in your hands—I love you. If there is any way in this world to win your love, I'll do it. I can't say anything more. You're—too bewildering."

He watched her drive away, and then went home. In his dreams "Auntie" sat upon his chest ; and he bribed her with promises of unlimited champagne suppers, and then went to sleep again.

The next morning, Miss Glynn sat in her little boudoir, thoughtfully surveying the rough draft of a letter which she had just penned. It was only rough, figuratively speaking, as every word of it had burned into her brain.

"I'll do it," she said. "I—I can't doubt him."

She sat down, carefully wrote the letter, and addressed it to "Septimus John Jones."

"How will this do, auntie?" she asked that elderly female of Darwinian aspect, who, spectacles on nose, sat knitting something which bore a strong family resemblance to the hose of a fire-engine. "How will this do, aunt?"

"Aunt" snorted disdainfully, and yet with a certain amount of compassion.

There was silence whilst Miss Glynn read the letter. When she had finished, the old lady threw up her hose, and emitted a little stream of compassionate snorts.

"What do you think of it, aunt?" demanded Miss Glynn, when her elderly relative had finished blowing off steam.

"What do I think?"

"Yes."

"You are of age, my dear. You may accept a crossing-sweeper if you like, but if you want to know what I think, I'll tell you. I think it's an admirable document to read before the Lunacy Commissioners. You'd never get out again after they had once read that."

"My dear aunt ; as Oscar Wilde would say, 'It's only the mad who are sane' "

Miss Glynn's aunt again threw up the hose some thirty or forty feet. "Oh! if you are going to quote *that*, you deserve a padded room."

"When you say *that*, do you refer to Mr. Wilde, or to my remark?"

But the old lady had fled, dragging the serpentine hose with her. Miss Glynn looked after her pityingly.

"That is so like aunt," she mused; "when you fairly catch her, she shuffles off this knitted coil of hers and makes a little Hampton Court maze of her own wherein to hide."

She touched the bell. A footman came up, and was heard tumbling about in the worsted coils outside.

"Barker," she said.

"Yes, Miss," Barker replied, apoplectically conscious that Miss Glynn's aunt on her upward flight was hauling at him as if he were a fifty pound salmon. "Yes, Miss?"

"Post this letter at once."

"Yes, Miss."

"And, Barker."

Miss Glynn's aunt was slowly hauling her victim through the door.

"Yes, Miss."

"Tell them to have afternoon tea in the blue drawing room to-morrow. I expect someone."

"Very good, Miss——" but Barker was hauled through the door, and disappeared.

Miss Glynn gave a sigh of relief. Then she walked up to the mirror and looked at her fair face.

"To-morrow, to-morrow, to-morrow!" she said impatiently. "Will it ever come? Isn't it a will-o'-the-wisp, always in front of us? To-morrow, to-morrow, to-morrow!"

'I have another life to meet,
Without which life my life is incomplete.'

She broke off with a little impatient laugh. "Another life," she said. "What if, after all, it should prove to be only a vulgar—a very vulgar fraction."

CHAPTER V.

When the genial President took the chair at the next meeting of the famous "John Jones," he missed one familiar face. But he promptly rapped the meeting to order, and, as was the custom of the gathering, began proceedings by calling the roll in his own ponderous way.

"Ruthin Dare?"

"Here."

"Danby Green?"

"Here."

"Lincoln Summerfield?"

"Here."

"Dudley Venne."

No answer. The professor looked over his spectacles at the empty chair and, between puffs, said: "I'm afraid the dance has been too much for our vivacious *confrère*. He looked rather anxious and careworn as we bade good-bye to the 'Book worms' last night—or this morning rather."

"It is to be hoped," said Lincoln Summerfield, "that a certain young lady was as good a dancer as she was handsome. To tell the truth, I was solicitous on the score, and wanted to ascertain for myself, but could not get her away from him. Talk about sticking closer than a brother! He stuck closer than a whole family-tree."

"Oh, Summerfield, don't you worry. They had some very comfortable rests between the dances," replied Danby Green.

"They did seem to sit it out. Out in a number of ways. Out of doors—out of sight," put in Ruthin Dare.

"Well, gentlemen," mildly remarked the President, "he may have been out of sight, but he certainly wasn't forgotten. You all seemed to have kept him vividly in your minds. Now to business. We will commence by disposing of the correspondence."

The address of the very first letter the benign President picked up, seemed to astonish him very much. He held the envelope to the light, scrutinized the address carefully, turned it over and scanned the back, shoved his spectacles back on his forehead, and read the address without their assistance.

"Gentlemen," he said, at length, "I hold a letter addressed thus—

'Septimus John Jones, Esq.,

'c/o John Jones, Author,

'Fleet Street,

'London.

'Strictly private.

'To be opened by no one but

'Mr. Septimus John Jones.'

It is unnecessary to state that the writing is evidently a lady's. Who is afflicted in this way? Which of you is a seventh son of Jones? Do any of you answer to the name of Septimus?"

No one answered to the name of Septimus.

"Well, the only thing we can do, under the circumstances, is to open this queerly

addressed envelope. Anyone knowing any just cause or impediment, &c.? No! Oh, well then, here goes!"

And this is the letter which was read by the President, on the ninth evening of the twelfth month of fogs:—

"Dear Mr. Septimus John Jones,—What a preposterous being you are to expect a girl to accept or reject your proposal by letter, when you do not give her your private address. Had it not been for the nonsensical nickname I gave you last night, I should not dare to send this letter to the address of the renowned 'John Jones.' But I know you will recognise the 'Septimus,' and claim the letter. If you have not thought better of your rashness, will you, Septimus John Jones, call upon me, Celia Glynn, to-morrow, at four o'clock, when the answer I shall give to your proposal will,

I feel, be *acceptable* to you.—1,281 De Vere Gardens, W."

There was intense silence as the President read this letter. Ruthin Dare had been inclined to giggle at first, but the solemn look on the faces of his companions suppressed all rising mirth, and the silence was unbroken as the President's eyes were raised from the paper, and slowly scanned each of the faces at the round table. Each second the silence grew deeper. It became painful. Jonas D. Rangle, like an angel of light, came to break it.

"Mr. President," he asked severely, "what else could we expect? In our mad and blizzard-like career we have brought up against a stone wall. This is what comes, I say, of dallying with *dilettanti*."

Then arose a wild hubbub. Everyone protested at once, and each louder than the other.

Rapping violently on the desk, the President, in a resonant voice, cried:—

"Mr. Rangle, will you please sit down." Then, more quietly, he continued, "Gentlemen, I always believe in knowing exactly what is before us. Firstly, here is a letter from a lady—a lady who, to the best of my knowledge and belief, I have never met. Secondly, this lady claims, or insinuates, which in these days of publicity amounts to the same thing, that we, 'John Jones,' have proposed to her; and, thirdly, she asks us to humbly wait upon her for her answer at four o'clock to-morrow afternoon. Fourthly, her address is 1,281, De Vere Gardens, W. These are the four facts we fain must face, as our alliterative poet would say. As a married man, I must repudiate the



MISS GLYNN BOWED TO 'JOHN JONES.'

suggestion that any proposal was ever made; but as a 'John Jones' I find myself committed to all that has been done, or that may be done, in the name of 'John Jones.' I will say no more. If any one of you can throw some faint glimmer of light on this matter let him please take the floor.

Each member of the little band looked at the others, but no one seemed to desire the floor. Then Ruthin Dare, in his bashful, hesitating way, arose, and said that he thought—almost believed, in fact—that the young lady whom Venne had danced with so often was called Glynn, or Flynn, or some such name.

The moment this was mentioned every one remembered the girl who had looked so brilliantly defiant the previous evening. All wanted to speak at once. Danby Green was called upon by the President.

"Speaking without prejudice, and with no antecedent knowledge of the defence to be set up, I should say that our best mode of procedure in the matter is to refer this most interesting document to our absent friend and co-labourer—apparently in literature only—Dudley Venne. I——"

Jonas D. Rangle was on his feet at once.

"I object, Mr. President; I absolutely, emphatically, irrevocably, and finally object to any referring anything to anybody. This letter is addressed to 'John Jones.' Those who sit around this table at our regularly constituted meetings—they and they alone—are 'John Jones.'"

"Mr. Rangle is right," said Lincoln Summerfield.

"Mr. President," said Jonas Rangle, again on his feet; "what we need is action. I'm not strong on love scenes, but I think I can just about compass this step. I move that a letter accepting the 4 o'clock invitation be sent to this young, old, middle-aged antediluvian, prehistoric, or whatever she is, lady. I also move that a note be sent to Mr. Dudley Venne notifying him that the fractions of 'John Jones' meet at 1,281, De Vere Gardens West, at 4 o'clock to-morrow, to transact business of the greatest importance. By 5 o'clock to-morrow afternoon, we'll know all about this proposal business, or I'm no prophet."

"I second the motion," yelled the four members at the table.

"It seems to be the only way out of the difficulty," said the President thoughtfully. "Mr. Rangle, the thanks of us all are due to you. You mayn't be classically beautiful,

but you are level-headed. One of you please frame the letter to the young lady."

Lincoln Springfield did so as follows:—

"'John Jones' presents his compliments to Miss Celia Glynn, and has great pleasure in accepting her kind invitation for to-morrow afternoon."

Then the meeting adjourned.

Some ten minutes after, Dudley Venne dashed up to the hall in a cab, and was disappointed to find all his friends gone and the room dark. As he went away he growled at the block on the Underground which had detained him, and strolled disappointedly homewards.

CHAPTER VI.

It is a fact that no letter requiring an answer, is ever written without the writer framing an answer to it in his or her own mind. If only the real answer would in every case turn out to be the wished for one, what a happy world this would be! What a lot of disappointment and anguish would be prevented.

When the postman knocked at No. 1,281, De Vere Gardens, at 8.30 o'clock the next morning, Miss Celia Glynn, in breathless expectancy, waited the maid's appearance. She knew exactly the answer she was to receive. In fact, she was rather inquisitive to know in what particulars it would vary from the answer she expected. She knew it must vary, but there could be only one answer as a whole, the variations could only be unimportant ones. She had thought of the "My own loved one," that was sure to be the commencement of the letter. The statement that her note had "let a great light into his soul," and how "he would watch in weary waiting the old Father Time crawl across the dial of the clock, until the appointed hour arrived," was also sure to be there. She had that feminine positiveness about the matter that scorns the thought of disappointment.

The maid brought the letter on a silver tray; and when Miss Glynn read it, she quietly folded it up, tore it to tiny pieces, and dropped them into the grate. Then she sat bolt upright, looking straight in front of her, and thinking as only a woman whose pride has been hurt can think. She felt no inclination to cry as many a girl would have done. But her face hardened, and she thought very, very bitter thoughts. *This* cold formal note to her acceptance! What did it mean? Had he repented of his words and now in a brazen-faced way

was about to call at her own house to tell her so? Then she upbraided herself for having committed her feelings to such a man. And—well the burden of her thoughts augured an uncomfortable reception for Mr. Septimus John Jones when he arrived.

Meantime, Venne, who had never heard of De Vere Gardens, was wondering what mad freak had taken possession of his other six-sevenths, as he perused the official notification. Why did they change the

place of meeting without consulting him? Was success turning their brains? Well, most of the brains were in his seventh. He would keep a steady control over them. All he wanted to know was when he should receive Miss Glynn's letter. Nothing else mattered much. A song danced through his brain; something about

"Love, love, love,—
Love makes the world go round."

Then he called himself a sentimental ass. But his thistles were roses. He could do all—

In his abstraction he walked into the ponderous form of a policeman.

"None of that young—," began the burly one in blue. Then his voice changed as Venne tipped him a shilling, and enquired the way to De Vere Gardens. "Fust turning to the right and half a mile down. Thankee, sir. Now you move on," in official tones, to a threadbare woman selling matches.

Venne was in a pitying mood just then. He gave the woman a shilling, and they both moved on. He was thinking of his own wretched existence and little did he dream that, at that very moment, the Professor—President of the "John Jones," followed by the other five-sevenths, was

rapping vigorously at the door of his lady love, Miss Celia Glynn, 1,281, De Vere Gardens West, and, twenty seconds later, was being shown into the drawing room by the astonished butler.

"This card to Miss Glynn—Miss Celia Glynn, please," said the Professor.

Barker hesitated and glanced in the direction of the other five. "That is the only card" the Professor added, reassuringly.

Barker disappeared.

For more than seven hours Miss Celia Glynn had turned the matter of the answering note over in her mind, and the

longer she thought the more determined she became. She had again made up her whole mind. She again knew exactly what he would say and exactly what she would answer. And her answers were certainly withering. She expressed no surprise when the card was



VENNE SNATCHED THE PAPER FROM THE PROFESSOR'S GRASP.

handed to her, but merely gave her hair those emphatic little pats at different angles and positions which only a woman can give, shook out the folds of her dress in places, and finally put on a look of serene indifference, composure, and scorn, and swept in to meet him.

Six gentlemen headed by the ponderous Professor stood bowing before her. Miss Glynn recoiled in astonishment. She glanced down that familiar line of hatless heads. Septimus was not there. Had he sent his abettors to settle with her? Surely nothing so mean. She stood with her hand on the door, and the expression of astonishment on her face gave place to one of defiance.

During this time, the Professor had carefully adjusted his gold-rimmed spectacles, and taken from his pocket a note that, in a flash, she recognized as her own. Clearing his throat he began:

"I have the honour of addressing Miss—Miss—Miss—"

"Celia Glynn," whispered the now thoroughly frightened Ruthin Dare. But the Professor heard him not, and unfolding the letter and running down the lines continued "Miss—let me see—yes—Miss Celia Glynn."

Miss Glynn bowed but said nothing.

"I hold here—"

There was a loud rap at the door. Jonas D. Rangle took advantage of the period this put to the President's speech to protest. "Mr. President: I would call your attention to the fact that this is not a complete meeting. One of us is absent. It is exactly thirty seconds to four. This meeting was convened for four. I move we give our absent one the thirty seconds breathing space to which he is entitled."

The door swung open, and Barker announced in a clear voice, "Mr. Dudley Venne."

The Professor's spectacles fell from his forehead. Miss Glynn started as she saw the young man saunter in, put his hat on a chair, and say—

"Hullo, brethren, this is grandeur with a vengeance. When did you rent this roo—" At this moment, he caught sight of the lady of his heart.

"Four o'clock," said Mr. Rangle. "Business, please, Mr. President."

The Professor called "Order," and when all was quiet, he added, "I will now read the document that is the occasion of our

visit. It is as follows:—"

"Dear Mr. Septimus—"

Then the whole situation flashed on the active brain of Venne. Dashing forward he snatched the paper from the astounded Professor's grasp, and commanded "Stop!" in a voice that made the *bric-à-brac* dance a jig on the mantle-piece. In the silence that followed, he said in a low and earnest voice:

"I grasp the situation. This is a letter intended for me. You have received it. I don't know what it contains—whether it's favourable or unfavourable to my suit, but I *do* know that, no matter what it con-



tains, none of you have anything whatever to do with it. It concerns me, and me alone."

Miss Glynn moved involuntarily towards her lover. She saw him as it were, at bay to six, in her own drawing-room, and a woman always sides with a man in the wrong, especially if he is handsome.

"Don't attempt to bully me, sir," said the President, flaring up. "Your proceedings are entirely unconstitutional. Your whole conduct is unconstitutional. You have struck at the very life of 'John Jones.' This, sir, is a regularly constituted meeting of 'John Jones,' sir, a meeting convened at the instance and invitation of this young lady. I call you to order, sir, and to your place at our side."

Venne looked at Miss Glynn. Her eyes flashed fire at the bald head of the Professor. Venne saw he would need to do no more fighting now. His battle was in Celia's keeping.

"'Mr. John Jones,' and all the rest of you," said Miss Glynn, "his place is at my side." Venne stepped to her side in a moment. "No more need be said in the matter I believe," and she bowed to the six.

"Pardon me, madam," said the Professor, "but I have a duty to perform. His action in this matter strikes at the very existence of 'John Jones.'"

"Mr. President," said Jonas D. Rangle, "there is one thing, and one thing only, to do under the circumstances. Mr. Venne has already broken our compact. I move he be given a chance to explain his action, and if no satisfactory explanation be forthcoming that he be dealt with to the satisfaction of the majority of 'John Jones.'"

"I will gladly explain, gentlemen," said Dudley Venne, as the President nodded for him to speak. "I admit a great falling away on my part. As you know, I was a good 'Jones' up to the night of the 'Bookworms.' No? You don't know? Well, believe me when I say I was. At the dance I met a young lady. Talked with her, danced with her, argued with her—and—and—finally proposed to her. You know the rest. I don't. What is the rest, Miss Glynn? Will you kindly tell me?"

"Was accepted by her," said Miss Glynn smiling.

"And was accepted by her, gentlemen," added Venne, bowing to his companions.

Then the Professor felt called upon to speak.

"I see," he said, "but it is too late now. We can't be so childishly inconsistent as to overlook this—this not wholly regrettable incident," and he bowed with courtly grace to Miss Glynn. "Gentlemen, we should have conquered the world had we carried out our—our plans. I—I need not refer you to—to ancient Biblical history with regard to the—the temptation to divulge a secret when it is shared by a member, however fair"—and again he bowed to Miss Glynn—"of the—the opposite sex."

"Gentlemen," and he raised his hand in a comprehensive and benedictory attitude—"Gentlemen, we part, as a whole, not in malice, not in anger, but as good friends. We have laboured together, and we have done much. We have chummed together, shared our triumphs together, and in the days when fortune frowned upon some of our individual fragments, we—we have assisted those fragments. But one of us in whirling through the heavily charged social atmosphere has spun within the radius of attraction of a star of far greater magnitude in all that is sweet and good than 'John Jones,' and, as a most natural consequence, must gradually draw farther and farther from us, and nearer to her. So, gentlemen, all that remains for us to do is to heartily congratulate the Star and the Attracted, and take our departure."

He bowed gracefully to Miss Glynn, and backed slowly out of the door. Slowly and sadly the others followed him in single file, and faded away into the busy world without. As they went down the staircase (was it fact or fancy?) Venne seemed to see six ghostly shapes detach themselves from the dejected group, and float away into invisibility. As he gazed, he was aware of a further floating form following the others. It was his own remaining ghostly fragment of the deceased "John Jones."

Miss Glynn saw them too. "What have you lost?" she said softly. "Am I worth it?"

"Auntie" advanced at this juncture, knitting needles in hand.

* * * * *

Three months afterwards, there was a wedding at St. George's, Hanover Square. One peculiarity about it was that six individuals of all shapes and sizes stood up with "John Jones" Venne as "best man."

Hers, not Mine.

WORDS BY THE REV. GERARD LEWIS.

MUSIC BY CLEMENTINE WARD.

Allegretto.

VOCAL.

PIANO.

mp

The

bells are ring - ing in the church, The fields are white with flow'r-ing may, The

sky is blue, the earth is green, But ah! 'tis not my wed - ding day— I

rit.

tempo e agitato.

woo'd her long, I woo'd her oft, I sigh'd my sigh, and

agitato.

p a tempo.

said my say. Her smile was sweet, Her voice was soft, But

colla parte. *p a tempo.*

cres. *rall.*

still she an-swer'd nay, nay, nay; Her smile was sweet, Her voice was soft, But

cres. *rall.*

rall.

still she an-swer'd nay, nay, nay.

rall. *lento e dolce.* *a tempo.*

cres.

A sai-lor lad from out the foam, A waif the sea had

cres.

mp

cast a - way, He al - most won be - fore he woo'd, And

mp

rall. *p* *cres.* *f* *tempo.*

soon she whisper'd, Yea, yea, yea. Then ring, ring on, ye wild church bells, Your

rall. *p* *cres.* *f* *tempo.*

Ped. * *sempre* Ped

a tempo.

mer - ry, mourn - ful chimes for aye, It is the fun' - ral of my heart, Be -

colla parte. *tempo.*

cres. *cres.* *ritenuto.*

- cause it is her wed - ding day; It is the fun' - ral of my heart, Be -

cres. *cres.* *ritenuto.*

tempo.

- cause it is her wed - ding day!.....

tempo.

Ped. * Ped. *



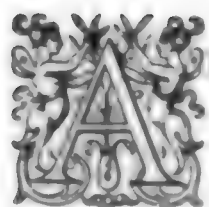
From photo by]

QUEBEC FROM LAVAL UNIVERSITY.

[W. Notman & Son, Montreal.

Episodes of Canadian Military Life.

BY COLONEL MITCHELL (LATE R.E.)



ABOUT 1680, Samuel Champlain, a gentleman of Saintonge, is said to have laid the foundation of the present city of Quebec, having arrived there in command of an expedition, organised by the King of France, for the purpose of making discoveries in the St. Lawrence, and establishing a settlement upon the coast. Quebec gradually grew in importance, until it became the capital of lower Canada, and possibly the most valuable colony possessed by France. The world-wide renowned and decisive battle upon "The Plains of Abraham," overthrew the power of France in Canada, and when General Wolfe and his rival Montcalm fell, the fortress passed under the dominion of the British Flag. An old writer narrates that the "scenic beauty of Quebec has been the theme of universal eulogy." The majestic appearance of Cape Diamond—its fortifications, with its five ancient gates—the cupolas—minarets, like those of an eastern city, blazing and sparkling in the sun—the loveliness of the panorama—the noble basin like a sheet of burnished silver (in which over one hundred vessels may ride in safety)—the graceful meandering of

the St. Charles river, before it commingles its waters with those of the noble St. Lawrence—the numerous village spires scattered around, the fertile fields, dotted with innumerable cottages (the abodes of a rich and moral peasantry), the distant falls of Montmorenci—the "park-like scenery of Point Levis"—the beauteous Isle of Orleans—and more distant still, the frowning cape Tourment, and the lofty range of purple mountains of the most picturesque form which bound the prospect, unite to make up a *coup d'œil* which, without exaggeration, is scarcely to be surpassed in any part of the world. If the scientific traveller, amidst the sensations experienced on scanning the various beauties of the scene, should recall to mind, in ascending the highest elevation of the promontory, that he is standing upon the margin of the primeval and the interminable forest, extending from a narrow selva of civilization to the Arctic regions, he will probably admit that the position of Quebec is unique in itself, and that in natural sublimity it stands, as to the cities of the continent, unrivalled and alone.

The fortifications encircling Quebec have

a world-wide fame. The citadel, situated on a plateau several hundred feet above the town and river, comprises a bastioned system specially adapted to the configuration of the ground, and, in the time we write of, used to be well armed with artillery. The "old lines" of the city followed the twisting and windings of the ground, and encircled a large portion of Quebec, having five gates, at which it was usual to have guards or sentries, carefully visited day and night by the officers on duty and by the field officer of the day.

On the opposite shore, and to prevent the possibility of bombardment of the town of Quebec from that quarter, three casemated, pentagonal, and solidly constructed forts (on specially approved principles—the ditches being flanked by strong caponnières, and the interior barracks being bomb-proof) have been built on the ridge of land that runs between the Grand Trunk Railway Depot and the village of Point Levis.

Visitors and tourists from Quebec often come over to see these fortifications, and on one occasion I asked a gentleman his opinion. He gave a deep sigh. "What excellent wine and beer vaults these casemates would make," he replied; "I am so sorry they are not on the Quebec side of the river." His ruling passion was strong, he was a wine and beer merchant. His soul was certainly not in fortification, and out of the abundance of his heart he spoke.

The combatant officers at Quebec thoroughly, if we rightly recollect, appreciated the axiom laid down by the author of the "Battle of Dorking" that "the Control Department was a new fangled affair, which, in the end, did as much harm to the British Army as the enemy."

Somehow that luckless department, with its non-combatant officers, were neither popular nor appreciated either by the military or the Quebec public.

Any shortcomings in the way of clothing, rations or fuel, were invariably laid at the door of that department with the unlucky name "Control," a name in after years considered so unfortunate that it was finally, after mature consideration, abolished.

Possibly the exhilarating nature of the Canadian air, possibly other causes, led to a good deal of special practical joking in the last two years (1870-71) that the British Army kept watch and ward over this "Gibraltar of the West."

To such an extent was practical joking carried as regards dinner-parties, that it

became almost essential, unless intimate with the host and hostess, to send and enquire if the dinner-party to which you "were bidden" was a genuine affair.

On more than one occasion a dinner-party of eight was suddenly increased by the unexpected arrival of six or seven ladies and gentlemen in evening dress, who had been wickedly lured to the house by means of fictitious invitations. On another occasion, a well-known hospitable resident, dining *en famille*, was disagreeably surprised by the invasion of guests for a small but imaginary evening dance. A serious affray on another occasion was created by the arrival of a rival band for a private ball with a fictitious order. The "genuine band" and its rivals, after indulging in wordy arguments, proceeded to blows, and the uninvited band had finally to be ejected by the police, an arrangement that materially disturbed the harmony and the music of the evening. All attempts to discover the authors were simply vain; invitations were invariably sent through the post, leaving no trace of the sender, and the handwriting usually resembled that of the supposed senders.

Perhaps the most daring and the most successful hoax was an advertisement, inserted in the *L'Evénement*, for fifty cats at a dollar each. On the day appointed for receiving the felines, a crowd collected in the street, and the Control Department officials, at first amused, soon became indignant. As their knowledge of patois French was limited, and the "cat merchants" were anxious to get the dollars from the Control chest, in exchange for their diminutive "smiling tigers," the scene was alike unique and exciting. "Still they come," was the cry, and at last the police had to intervene to clear the streets, when, amidst loud cheers, a sleigh laden with pussy cats in baskets, boxes, bags, hampers, &c., drove into the square, near the "Control Office." This was Monsieur B——, a general dealer from Point Levis, a village on the opposite side of the Saint Lawrence. Monsieur had a local reputation for being a shrewd hand at driving a bargain, and was an early riser and most assiduous in his business. Monsieur always scanned his *Evénement* on its arrival by first post, and noticing the "cat advertisement," and being on business intent, tho' of a frugal mind, he immediately went round the village and bought up twenty-five of his neighbours' cats, at prices varying from threepence

to sixpence per cat. Rejoicing over the prospects of his speculation, Monsieur and the live cargo crossed the St. Lawrence by the 9.30 p.m. steamer, and, hiring a sleigh, drove up the snow-clad town with his merchandise. Monsieur's indignation at the failure of his speculation was simply superb, and his life was a burden for many months.

Monsieur, being a good Catholic, no doubt looked forward to the rest of the Sabbath

day as a refreshing contrast to the labours and cares of the week, but on that particular Sunday, Monsieur became the butt of his friends and neighbours. Monsieur, it is true, had honestly paid for what cats he had purchased, but we are afraid that there were several little vulgar boys about, who, hearing on

Thursday morning that Monsieur was buying cats, laid hold of all stray pussies they could find, and sold them to Monsieur. Great was the lamentation at Point Levis that day over several highly respectable cats that had suddenly disappeared from their homes. Sunday was a day of retribution to poor Monsieur, because, by the old French laws which governed Quebec, all Government advertisements headed like this one, with the Royal Arms and supporters, were

bound by law to be neatly copied, and placarded on the doors of all the Roman Catholic churches in the outlying parishes of Quebec.

It is but fair to say that the church officials were most diligent in carrying out the law, and as it was possible that some of the distant parishes might not be aware of the advertisement, a good many copies of the Government newspaper were posted

from Quebec by some of the "wags" on Saturday morning. The supply of cats on Monday from the outskirts was considerable in consequence. Probably the joke would have soon died a natural death had not certain press writers circulated the story. The Control Department took the matter diligently in hand, and in spite of the chaff of the



"WHITE HANGS THE MOON IN THE FROSTY SKY."

naughty boys, who for many weeks called after them "Puss! puss! puss!"

The Control officers made numerous efforts to discover the authors of the hoax, and matters soon took a serious turn. One of the Control officers, who resided at Quebec, had a cat brought to his house one afternoon by a boy who demanded a dollar. The officer happened to open the door, and at once made a prisoner of the boy, and insisted on knowing who sent



From photo by]

MONTREAL, FROM THE MOUNTAIN.

[W. Notman & Son, Montreal.

him. The urchin, thoroughly frightened, made the first excuse that came uppermost, and said "a gentleman living in that house, pointing to one occupied by, shall we say, Mr. Winkle, who had rather a reputation for practical joking.

"I've got it now," ejaculated the official, and he let the boy go, and he departed.

At noon on the following day the official, who we will term Mr. Porter, presented himself at Mr. Winkle's office, and was, in due course, requested to walk in and take a chair.

There was no brotherly love between the pair, and the irate Mr. Porter at once plunged in *medias res*.

"I have come, sir, about that confounded cat hoax," said Mr. Porter.

Mr. Winkle grinned, but said nothing. He thoroughly enjoyed the joke, and was quite aware of the affair, but was innocent of being the author.

"I have come, sir, about that cat hoax," said Mr. Porter, raising his voice. "I call it a most ungentlemanly proceeding to send cats to my office, but when it comes to—I do not know what to call it," added Mr. Porter, who by this time had worked himself into a passion.

Mr. Winkle laughed outright.

"Look here, Mr. Porter," he said, in a patronising manner, "I never sent cats to your office, simply because I never thought of it. I have enjoyed the joke, and am enjoying it still, but I cannot claim to be the author. As for sending cats to your house, I never did such a thing, and should be sorry to do so, because I have a great respect for your wife. I can't say I have any for yourself," added Mr. Winkle grimly, "I'll wish you good morning."

There was nothing for it, Mr. Porter had to depart; and, of course, Mr. Winkle told the story with many additions.

A few nights afterwards there were some garrison theatricals, and in one of the acts a gallant officer had to enter a drawing-room, in a languid fashion, take up the newspaper, and say "What news?" By happy inspiration, he added, "Cats for the Control." The house yelled, shrieked, and roared with delight for at least five minutes.

Its success was complete. The newspaper, of course, reproduced the "hit," and, like the cat hoax, it became the topic of general conversation, and finally was nearly ended in the "catastrophy" of a duel.

I had finished my breakfast one morning, in the pretty and picturesque hut in which I lived near Point Levis, when a special messenger, breathless with excitement and running, brought me the disagreeable intelligence that my pay-sergeant, also Sergeant F., and Private H., had not presented themselves at the early morning parade, and it was feared they were on their way to the United States.

The fact that I had, on the previous afternoon, handed the pay-sergeant a cheque for a good sum, to enable the soldiers' weekly payments to be made, was not an agreeable reflection, nor was it rendered more pleasant by the hasty examination I made of the accounts during the morning, which indicated a considerable balance on the wrong side. The company cash-box was in its place, but an examination of its contents indicated that *all* had disappeared, one half-penny excepted. I had now two disagreeable tasks before me. The first, the restoration of the public money, for which I

was, as captain of the company, responsible ; the second, to catch the offenders, make them give up the stolen money, and take care they were well punished. The first task was somewhat lightened by the interesting fact that the three deserters had, somehow or other, purchased a trap and fast horse. Not being accustomed to driving, they had upset the trap, broken it in several pieces, and had a narrow escape of breaking their own necks. The horse, however, was unhurt, and a smart non-commissioned officer promptly locked the beast up in a loose box—a wise precaution, as subsequent events will show. I reflected that the horse was worth something at all events, and that I had a fair lien on him.

I promptly completed the "deserter reports" and took them myself to the special government detective, to enable him to chase and catch the deserters. These reports give their ages, heights, complexion, colour of hair, eyes, supposed dress, any special marks, general appearances, &c.

The government reward of £5 for catching each deserter, total £15 for the trio, was not to be despised ; so the government detective promptly drove off with his assistants in a light caleche, a Canadian carriage drawn by two swift trotting horses, in the direction of the United States frontier, distant 80 miles.

If the deserters succeeded in reaching the

frontier and passing through the chain of look-out men who lived there (and who supplemented their incomes at times by catching deserters) they could, with impunity, put out their thumbs to their not very respectable noses, or, in other words, they could, under international law, plead they were on United States territory, and were therefore exempt from capture.

The descriptive report of the deserters was circulated, and a special watch kept for the missing three, and, after a short interval, the government detective returned at his leisure, with his attendant satellites, to Point Levis, feeling the inward satisfaction of men who have done their duty.

"One or two 'Bums' (the slang term for writ-server or bailiff) about, sir," was the report made to me by a non-commissioned officer, while I was engaged in the disagreeable task of examining the accounts and preparing the balance-sheet.

"What do they want?" I enquired.

"The pay-sergeant owes them money, and they want to get the horse and sell it."

"All right," I said, "tell them to go and catch the pay-sergeant and they will probably be paid what they may be owed ; and turn them out of the camp and keep the door of the box, where the horse is, locked."

These orders were obeyed : the "Bums" hung about for some time, but finding they were not likely to get anything, except



From photo by]

"CURLING AND OTHER SPORTS MADE THE TIME QUICKLY FLY." (W. Notman & Son, Montreal).

perhaps a toss into the camp pond, at length disappeared, and I never heard any more about them. That evening I sold the horse for an amount that, if necessary, would be an acceptable asset on the credit side of the pay-sergeant's balance sheet, and felt more disposed to follow the advice of a good-natured Irishman, "to keep an aisy mind upon myself."

That duly completed my labours as regards the examination of the accounts and the preparation of the balance sheet, and though I had no reason to doubt the accuracy of either, the more I looked at them, the less I liked them. Moreover, a number of "regimental necessities," such as shirts, socks, razors, shaving brushes, and other necessary and indispensable articles (which are usually kept in military regimental stores, and issued to the soldiers on repayment of their actual wholesale value) were missing, and I was of course responsible for them—being in command of the company. One fine afternoon—one of those rare autumn afternoons peculiar to Canada, which precede the brief "Indian summers"—I was busy in my office within one of the Point Levis Forts—there came a tapping at the door. I did not follow the example of the senior Mr. Weller, and say with dignity, "let 'em tap," but, I shouted, "come in." A most welcome sight met my astonished eyes. The pay-sergeant *in handcuffs*, escorted by two or three stern "look-out men," and accompanied by the other sergeant and private, and followed by a tail of men, women and children. The "deserter party" looked terribly crest-fallen, and presented a dirty, untidy, and generally disreputable appearance. Of course, they were in plain clothes, and formed a marked contrast to the usually trim soldier-like demeanour they offered when on the parade ground, in their smart uniform, or drilling in the camp. The pay-sergeant and his comrades had been captured by the "look-out party," as one afternoon they had cautiously approached the frontier of the United States, and were then compelled to take a homeward march of many miles—to Point Levis camp. The deserters looked jaded and downcast; they certainly were very weary and footsore. The private reported he felt poorly, and went, as a prisoner, into hospital, but the pay-sergeant evinced an anxious desire to minimize his crime. I am afraid he told a good many tales of his disappearance with the public money, possibly not consistent with the

facts of the case, but as he indicated a desire to make up the accounts, and to make good any deficiency in the money, I did not feel justified in doing otherwise than giving him all proper aid.

Accordingly, after taking the names and addresses of the look-out party, in order that they should receive the reward of £15 in due course for their exertions, I let them go, and they departed.

The pay-sergeant produced in a day or two a proper statement of the accounts and regimental necessities, by which it appeared he had issued a good many to the soldiers, according to regulation, but had omitted to make the necessary "credits" in their accounts. However, there was a considerable deficit, according to his own showing, and I enquired what he proposed to do about it. "My wife has the money, sir," coolly replied the sergeant, and after duly giving credit for the money received for the valuable quadruped, that had so nearly carried the whole party into the United States, that excellent dame actually produced the whole of the money, and the pecuniary difficulty was removed.

I then enquired about the disappearance of the uniform and the regulation belts worn by the party, but the replies were not satisfactory. When, however, the pay-sergeant realized that he was amenable to military law for these missing articles, he became more loquacious, and was pleased to inform me that if I had no objection to his wife going to Quebec she would probably be able to secure the articles. I informed him that his wife, as far as military discipline was concerned, was at liberty to go where she pleased. And away she went to the little pier where the powerful steamer, that performed many daily trips across the St. Lawrence, was moored.

I suspected that the soldiers had illegally sold or pawned their uniform, and belts, &c., and gave instructions for a certain detective to follow the sergeant's wife. As soon as she entered the shop of a well known receiver of stolen goods, on Upper Hill, Quebec, the detective promptly obtained a search warrant, and entered the shop also.

The proprietor was subsequently prosecuted before the Canadian Court of Justice for "having knowingly and wilfully aided, abetted, and encouraged Her Britannic Majesty's soldiers to desert from their corps or regiment, and with having, about the same time and place, illegally purchased from them sundry and divers suits of

uniform, belts, boots, &c., the property of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, and retained the same for many days in his warehouse, Quebec, without having given due notice to the police," and such conduct being highly subversive to the interests of Her Majesty's service, he was duly convicted of both charges, and, after the judge had commented upon the gravity of the offence, he fined him a good many Canadian dollars and heavy costs of court, a penalty special to Canadian law in connection with aiding the Queen's soldiers to desert their colours.

private soldiers, they gradually regained the positions they had lost.

Let us tell of the tobogganning. This truly Canadian amusement is finding its way into the United Kingdom. The toboggan, or the Indian sleigh, a thin plank is "boarded up" neatly at one end and black-leaded underneath, and drawn with a light cord over the "white raiment dropped from on high, when white hangs the snow over roof, over wold, and white hangs the moon in the frosty sky."

The Citadel plain, Quebec, was the tobog-



'THE CITADEL PLAIN WAS THE TOBOGGAN GROUND, PAR EXCELLENCE.

After a brief delay the three deserters realized that "the way of transgressors is hard," and were duly tried by a court-martial. The sergeants were reduced to the rank of private soldiers, and, with the private who deserted along with them, were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment in the nearest military prison. By the irony of fate, their terms were shortened by the circumstance of the company being withdrawn from Canada to Halifax and Bermuda, in which latter colony they had ample time and opportunity to turn over "new leaves," and, I believe, that after a good period of serving in the ranks, and rendering good and faithful service as

gan ground *par excellence*. The feeling can never be forgotten. The exhilarating dryness of the Canadian winter air, the charm of the pastime, enhanced by the element of danger, the laughable upsets that often take place, far more than counterbalance the labour of dragging the empty toboggan to the top of the hill. Once there, the passengers seat themselves, one a pretty young lady (alias Muffin), the other probably a military gentleman, taking his pleasure. A slight push, a slight shove, away they go, forty miles an hour at least. Now the toboggan flies over the white plain, a slight touch of the hand in the snow, and it runs to the right, another

touch, it runs to the left. Will the couple pass the gap safely? a space twenty-five feet wide made through a fence. Yes, they are all right, away the toboggan skims, the flat level below is reached, and away it goes to the very edge of the toboggan ground. This is the bright side of tobogganning. That fence was responsible for many disasters; and several toboggans, badly steered, and their passengers, met painful accidents. In one case a broken jaw, in other cases severe contusions, a broken leg, and numerous minor accidents, completed the list of casualties.

But the "widow" incident surpassed all.

A widow was tempted once by one of the Control Department to try the slide; and, trusting the "Control," of course, to guide the toboggan, she consented. She was carefully "packed up" and off they went—down the slopes at 40 miles an hour, till the fence was rapidly approached. A scream, a shriek—away shot the widow, head first, into a heap of snow.

She was thoroughly submerged, but her boots were visible. The "Control" dug his feet into the snow, and checked the speed. The boots fell down, and the widow emerged, but *across* the track of the toboggan. "Control" and widow collided, toboggan passed over them in wild career, and reached the foot of the slope, empty. The widow and the "Control" embraced (not in love), and like the "Control cats," playfully rolled about and over one another to the bottom of the slope, when they were picked up, thoroughly exhausted.

Alas! little pity fell to their lot. The

incident was unanimously voted to be the best of the toboggan incidents, and the widow the heroine of the piece. Indeed, for some time, the story, in various forms, rivalled that of the immortal "pussy cats," but the widow and the "Control" no longer honoured the toboggan ground—and their places knew them no more.

The winter brought about a fancy dress ball, in the Rink, at Quebec—a large wooden building, having its floor of glittering ice. Some of the Quebec newspapers thus described it: "The bugle sounded at 9 p.m., and the motley crowd of skaters rushed upon the ice, over which they dashed in high glee, their spirits stirred to the utmost by the enlivening music, and the cheering presence of hundreds of ladies and gentlemen.

"The gentlemen, in addition to the usual characters, introduced some novelties: an owl, a monkey, a monster bottle, a tailor at work, a boy on horseback—all capital representations—of 'night' and 'morning,' a vivandière, and other characters that appeared to advantage.

"The skaters presented both a varied and brilliant appearance—their parts being well sustained as to costume and deportment, and their movements on the ice being characterized by that grace and skill of movement bred of long practice. The dances included quadrilles, waltzes, galops, &c."

Curling and other sports made the time quickly fly, and the feeling of regret was general when we received our orders to leave Quebec. Alas! Canada is no longer a military station for the British soldier.



From photo by]

QUEBEC FROM THE RIVER

[W. Notman & Son, Montreal.



THE bivouac by Fort St. Julien was uninviting. The ground was soppy and sodden from the continued wet, and trod into a mucous paste. The scene might be described as one of cheerless animation. Most of the bushes and undergrowth had been cut down and used, with branches of trees and the wreck of wagons, for firing. The litter of the fights fought in and around the same spot a fortnight previously was still plain and common—forsaken caps, belts and haversacks, flattened canteens, broken gunstocks, dismantled tumbrils, fragments of shells, the skeletons of horses, the multitudinous jetsam of conflict. The rain had washed away the foul red pools, and the gales had cleared the air, for the soil had been beaten by fierce showers and swept by fierce gusts; and it was well, for even if remains of hastily buried fellow-creatures had been laid bare here and there, the odour of the battlefield, that odour which breeds pestilence, had been shaken asunder and scattered. Of the senses affected by the actual process of war, that of smell suffers most acutely, and least is said of it in the records of battle. Feeling

is shocked, but one expects that. The sight is revolted by many gruesome objects; but

the nostril it is which is offended most pungently, and the longest.

Between the height of St. Julien and that crowning the redoubt of les Bottes, a couple of miles to the north-east of Metz, was huddled the third army-corps, now commanded by Marshal Lebœuf. To that had been assigned the task of breaking through the German lines, possibly to take the road to Thionville, probably to join hands with friends outside. McMahon may have been somewhere there, nay, must have been, reasoned the men, or Bazaine would not have ordered an advance. The spirit of the French troops was as yet untamed by their reverses. In the 81st, to whom the van, the post of honour, had been confided, it was at its highest, although the ranks of the gallant regiment had been thinned by casualties, fatigue, and sickness. They knew their exact posts of attack on the bulging semi-circle in front, for they had been marched to them on the 25th of August, and unaccountably had been marched back again. Then pelted down the pitiless rain,

and it was only on the morning of the 30th that orders were sent out for the issue of two days' rations of biscuits and bacon. That meant work, as the whole camp and the town, now crowded with wounded and peasant refugees from the adjoining villages, knew full well, and the spies likewise. For the length of the day the 81st were on the alert, impatiently awaiting the command to stand to their arms and push on to what might be the decisive action. But it came not, and fatigued and fevered with suspense they lay in groups beside their little *tentes d'abri*, and indulged in a discontented growl.

But luckily a diversion arrived in the presence of the *vi-vandière* and Marengo, returning from Metz.

"What news, Mère?"

"WHAT NEWS, MERE?"

"Nothing to be vexed at," she answered, "but let me get my breath first. Husband yours, my lads, for I am thinking a few puffs extra might be prayed for by many of you by this time to-morrow."

"We are to break out at last, then?"

"Yes; so I judge by the preparations in the town. They are fitting up railway carriages as hospitals, and the surgeons are sharpening their knives; but I am thinking those Messieurs yonder may need attentions of that sort worse than we. But that is not the great news."

"Out with it, Mère."

"I was passing by the Hôtel de l'Europe when an old officer hailed me, and after looking at me steadfastly, seized me by both hands and kissed me on both cheeks. We had a chat about Africa and my poor, dear Crépin; he patted Marengo on the neck, and he enquired after the 81st, and sent them his love. 'Tell them,' he said, 'that I hope to meet them to-morrow.' Now, you wouldn't guess who it was."

"One of the Marshals, of course," said a bearded sapper, with a wink.

"No, but a greater than any of the marshals we have here—Changarnier himself."

There was a cry of joy from the group of soldiers.

"By the beard of the Prophet," said the



grim Captain Reynard, who had served in Algeria, "but that is glorious."

It was so. The veteran of so many ruthless, Algerian campaigns was in Metz—he who was seized by orders of Louis Napoleon on the night of the 2nd December, in his lodgings at No. 3 of the Rue Saint Honoré at Paris, conducted to Mazas, and thence transferred next day to the fortress-prison of Ham. There he was confined in the cell which had been tenanted by the Prince-President. But when France was in deadly clinch with the foreigner, in 1870, the aged warrior only remembered that she had claim to the right hands of her sons, smothered his antipathy to the empire, and hastened to the aid of the flag.

At dawn on the 31st, Lebœuf's corps was stirring, and after having made an early meal, formed up with its artillery in front, and moved, amid swarming dust, from under the forts towards the villages opposite the German lines. There was a cluster of those hamlets, all now deserted, in the wavy country outside, intersected by rivulets, straight lines of poplars, and the high roads to Saarbrück and Saargemünd. By eight,

Montaudon's division faced Noisseville. At half-past ten the guns on Fort St. Julien began pounding away over their heads with heavy shot, but appeared to inflict no losses on the enemy. The development of the French was too tardy, and there was a confusion of orders, a marching this way and that, which gave the Germans opportunity to concentrate masses of troops. There was intermittent fighting, but a persistent advance. About four the intention of Bazaine seemed to be to turn his onslaught on the plateau of Ste. Barbe to the north of Noisseville, for three batteries were put in position so as to command it.

The genuine attack was not essayed until nigh five o'clock, when the thunder of the guns reverberated almost continuously, and columns of French made simultaneous onset on the chain of villages in the dips of the hills jutting from the plateau. The Germans had the superiority in metal, nevertheless, Montaudon's boys tramped vigorously forward, entered Nouilly and Noisseville, dislodging the enemy's

foreposts and sending them in retreat to Servigny. The skirmishers opened fire on the batteries protecting the latter position and soon peppered their servants so that they had to drive off, and then their own field-pieces galloped up and opened with shell.

By half-past six the advantage was with the French. Our friends of the 81st were well to the head, the apex of the piercing wedge, and had not lost many of their number; but elsewhere, over the broad front of more than four miles, the casualties were heavy.

Throughout the tedious hours of the day the sun had been shining as tranquilly over the scene of carnage as if the harvest that was being reaped below was not a harvest of death. The map of the firmament which the eyes of men have seen through millions of daybreaks, but which never tires, familiar, yet ever new and of constant change, was serene and most beautiful in those upper spaces where it rose above the troubles of battle. A light wind wafted its sighs, and, like the lullaby of a nurse, hummed its leafy *Æolian* cadences in perpetual soft volume, audible in the



"FORWARD WITH THE BAYONET!" CHANGARNIER CRIED.

lulls of the racket and tornado of strife. Nature, high above and far around the rim of action, was full of quiet power, and majestic in its indifference. The machinery of God worked unruffled. Beside it, this tumult of man's creation was petty, was but as the fluttering of wild fowls' wings in some pond to the mighty heaving ocean pulsing with the solemn regular beat of eternity's pendulum. Save the combatants, there was little life around. The singing birds had fled or were dead. The only birds that lurked in the angry neighbourhood were buzzards, hawks, and those of the unclean carnivorous brood which gorge on corpses.

The French were fatigued, they had been on foot since morn, and instead of fortifying themselves in the village, some made coffee, but the greater part crouched to rest in the shelter of walls. But they were happy, they felt that victory was with them, and there is nothing that refreshes so much as the throb of satisfaction, when one feels that one is successful. They had done their duty, now it was the turn of the reserves. The Germans would have to deal with the Guards, and they, strong of physique, perfect in training and of tried valour, would treat them to some unwelcome novelties.

And so they waited, chuckling over what was in store for their opponents. But, the reserves were expected in vain, and the shadows were deepening. There would be no more butchery until the morrow. The Commander-in-chief was surely meditating some master stroke. While the attack was thus at a standstill, Memerty's Prussian Grenadiers crept up stealthily in the obscurity, raised a resonant *hoch*, and with a quick, strong burst succeeded in re-occupying Noisseville. There was chagrin and irresolution among the surprised French, when suddenly a figure made its appearance in front of the 81st, a tall, meagre figure, bent with age, brown-cheeked and white-bearded, with nose hooked like an eagle's.

"Hearken, my lads," it cried in sharp resolute tones.

"It is Changarnier," exclaimed Captain Reynard.

"Noisseville has been stolen from us, we must not allow that. *En avant ! à la baïonnette !*"

Like to a lean old lion of Atlas, red-eyed, with ravenous greed springing on his prey, he was. The general with the faded lace on his coat, the general whose sword had rusted for nigh a score of years in the scab-

bard while juniors were outstripping him, made his ultimate bid for renown. He was young again, his veins throbbed with a quicker current, he felt the tingle and thrill of glory's magnetism, he was wielding a weapon, not for a dynasty, but for France, and against, not savages nor insurgents, but a disciplined and a foreign enemy. He might fall, but what of that? 'Twas the death he coveted, 'twas the soldier's death. He could show that though his hand might have grown feeble, his heart was stout and true to France.

"Forward with the bayonet!"

The appeal was electrical. The answer was a yell of furious enthusiasm, the "charge" was beaten on the drums and blown on the bugles; and, ranging shoulder to shoulder, an inflamed host pressed onward at the double in the wake of the stern white-beard who brandished a naked blade. It was desperate, that combat with cold steel in the dusk, pencilled with lurid flashes. The Germans, surprised in turn, were borne back until Servigny was reached, but the French never checked in their impetus, but dug them in and out of it, and the scared men in spiked helmet did not halt until they were at the Chateau Gras on the height of Ste. Barbe. Hurrah! The gap of sortie was made. It only remained to carry the plateau from which the enemy was already removing his cannon.

And then Bazaine arrived on the field, and ordered that the drummers should on no account beat a faster pace than the march, and that movements should cease for the night. They might only lead to confusion. Having rapidly traversed the line of battle, he rode to Fort St. Julien, and went to bed, leaving his army to look after itself. The French were oppressed with fatigue, and the bulk of the regiments withdrew somewhat to the rear, where they could sleep more at their ease. Ordinary precautions were neglected, but the soldiers of King William made war seriously, and before Bazaine had finished his first sleep, they had regained their forfeited positions except Noisseville, which was held by the 81st.

The morning of the 1st of September was ushered in by a terrific hail of shot and shell at four, from the Germans. There was a dense cold mist out in the valleys; one could not distinguish objects at more than a couple of yards. Only the tops of the hills peeped from the blanket of fog. Memerty's grenadiers, who had sworn to capture Noisseville,

made their effort in the atmospheric shroud, but failed, and the 81st hazarded sorties after them. Boute-en-train, who had not been once hit through the midst of the storm of missiles, was foremost in these fool-hardy ventures. It is to be feared that he had forgotten Mère Crimée's warning not to take aim, but he had his excuse; more than one dear to him had fallen by his side. But when he was sure he would not waste his bullet he fired at random, that is to say, into the thick of the enemy. The 2nd Prussian Infantry Brigade was ordered up, and succeeded, with very heavy losses, in taking the outskirts of the village, but the French brought their mitrailleuses into play, and drove them off. Three times those outskirts were taken, and thrice the Prussians were ejected. They accepted their last peremptory notice to quit as decisive, and desisted from the offensive. This was at eight in the morning: battery after battery was brought up to punish the French for their tenacity, and a hell-fire of

projectiles hissed and circled over doomed Noisseville. There must have been fifty guns concentrated upon it at one period; but the French stuck to the blackened blazing heap of collapsing masonry until Lebœuf gave the order to retire, and with curses the stiff fellows turned their backs to the foe, who had neither cowed nor conquered them. Thus terminated the last stubborn attempt to break out from Metz. Noisseville was the hottest corner in the hot zone that day; the 81st was the bravest regiment there, and Boute-en-train the bravest man in it, by acclamation of his comrades. He was proud, but he was not happy. Neither was Captain Reynard. That grim fighter was gnawing the ends of his moustache viciously as they marched back to the bivouac, and blushed as he saluted Changarnier. But the stern, white beard did not see him—his sight was not good. His eyes were moist, but neither because of the fog nor of the rheum of age.



• FINIS •



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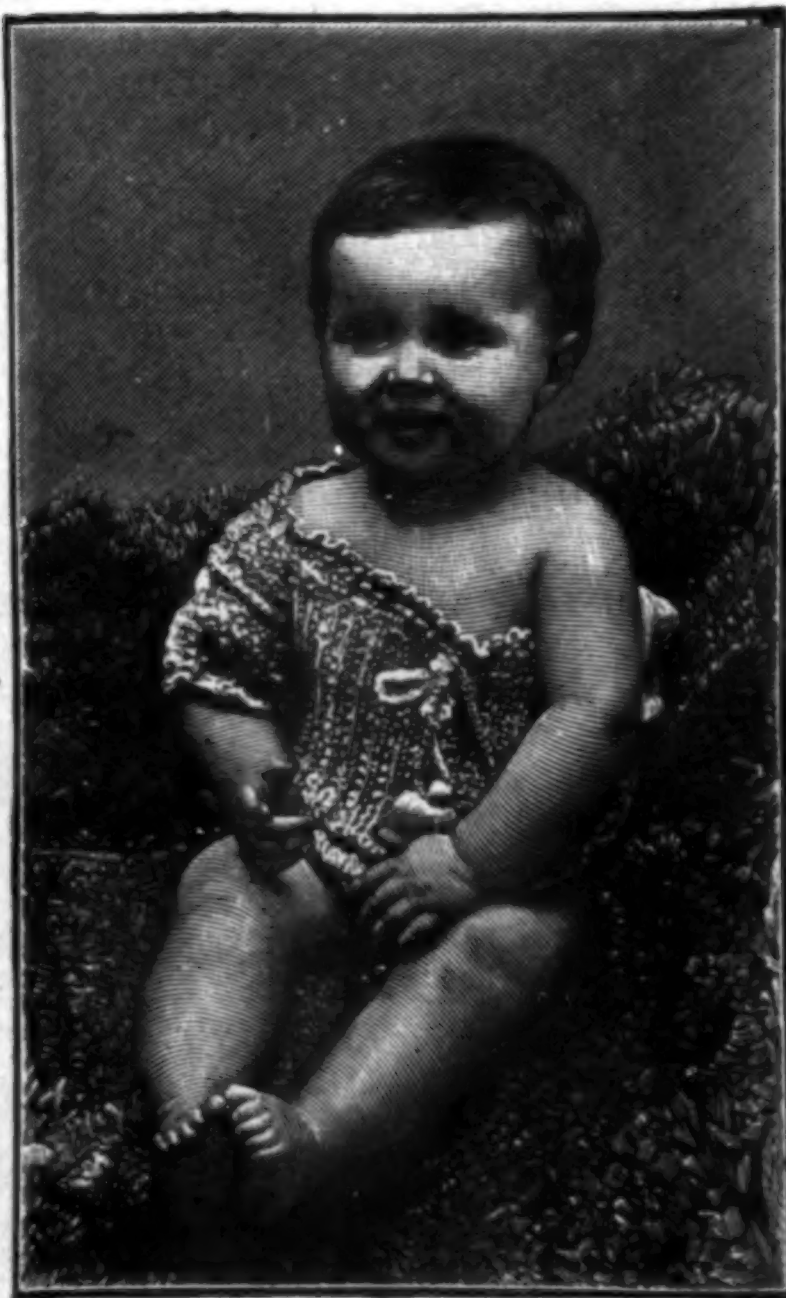
ELEVEN months ago this Magazine was first placed before the public, to whom we now return hearty thanks for the largest circulation of any threepenny magazine in the United Kingdom. We wish, also, to express our heartfelt gratitude to those who have acted upon our suggestion, and have given away their copies, when read, to brighten the homes of the poor. Almost all the well-known British authors have contributed to our columns, including Walter Besant, Rudyard Kipling, James Greenwood, Hawley Smart, J. A. O'Shea, George R. Sims, Charles Ogilvie, Fitzgerald Molloy, E. Gowing Scopes, Florence Marryat, Helen Mathers, Annie Thomas, L. T. Meade, Henry Herman, Luke Sharp, and Davenport Adams. Our artists' work has been appreciated, and our system of giving headings and initials has been largely copied by our more expensive contemporaries; and our special feature of offering our readers a song by a well-known composer has also obtained the flattery of imitation.

We do not complain, but in one particular our readers do; they say we do not appear often enough. "Why do you not start a weekly magazine?" is a question often addressed to us by persons who complain that there is nothing suitable for family reading issued weekly. The majority of our correspondents seem to require a penny periodical with the contents of an ordinary shilling magazine, and an absence of puffs. The retiring disposition and the natural modesty of the violet are qualities only found in the modern advertiser when the advertising manager goeth round to collect his little accounts; and the proprietors agree to abstain from the sale of tea and cigarettes, though they have kindly consented to oblige our readers, and start the LUDGATE WEEKLY MAGAZINE.

This penny magazine will consist of 32 pages of reading matter, contributed by the leading authors of the day; it will be ably edited by Charles Ogilvie, whose novel, "The Lost Diamonds," has been such a splendid success; and it will contain a few illustrations.

The LUDGATE MONTHLY will continue its prosperous course, but little altered, we trust, and that for the better; and the Penny Weekly Magazine will arise, not like the phoenix, from our ashes, but as a son, which in time may even become greater than his father. That you will give a hearty welcome to the new-comer, and order early from your newsagent the copy dated the 5th of March, 1892, is the earnest request of your humble servant,

THE EDITOR OF THE LUDGATE MONTHLY.



G. E. MORRIS. Aged 8 Months.

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